

# HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 March 2023 at 1pm via Teams

## Voting members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ATTENDANCE	TERM ENDS
<b>Maintained Nursery (1)</b>			
Shabana Aslam	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	APOLOGIES	Sep 2026
<b>Maintained Primary - Schools (4)</b>			
Rachel Anderson	Dr Triplett's School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Kris O'Sullivan	Deanesfield Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Mel Penney	Glebe Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2027
Carly Rissen	Colham Manor	PRESENT	Sep 2024
<b>Maintained Primary - Governors (4)</b>			
John Buckingham	Glebe Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Jim Edgecombe (CHAIR)	Whiteheath Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Tony Eginton	Minet Nursery & Infant School & Hillside Junior School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2024
<b>Maintained Secondary (1)</b>			
Dan Cowling	Oak Wood School	APOLOGIES	Sep 2026
<b>Maintained Special (1)</b>			
Jenny Rigby	Meadow High School	PRESENT	Sep 2027
<b>Academies (9)</b>			
John Garner	Ruislip High School	PRESENT	Sep 2026
Tracey Hemming	Middlesex Learning Partnership	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Nicola Kelly	Charville	PRESENT	Sep 2024
Helen Manwaring	Swakeleys School	PRESENT	Sep 2022
Catherine Mosdell	Frays Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2023
David Patterson	Queensmead School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
Sandra Voisey	Laurel Lane Primary School	PRESENT	Sep 2023
(2 vacancies)			
<b>Special Academies (1)</b>			
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	PRESENT	Sep 2026
<b>Alternative provision (1)</b>			
Paul Chambers	The Skills Hub	APOLOGIES	Sep 2027
<b>Private Voluntary &amp; Independent Early Years Providers (2)</b>			
Elaine Caffary	4 Street Nursery	PRESENT	Sep 2024
(1 vacancy)			
<b>14-19 Partnership (1)</b>			
Wayne Edwards	Heathrow UTC	PRESENT	Sep 2027
<b>Other attendees (non-voting)</b>			
<b>Independent Non-Maintained Special School</b>			
Debbie Gilder	Pield Heath School		NOT REQUIRED
<b>Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Schools)</b>			
Eleesa Dowding	Harmondsworth		NOT REQUIRED
Kate Needs	Lady Bankes		PRESENT (OBSERVING)
<b>Shadow Representative (Maintained Primary - Governor)</b>			
Jo Palmer	Hillside Infant School and Hillside Junior School		PRESENT
Graham Wells	Colham Manor Primary School		PRESENT
<b>Officers</b>			
Kate Boulter	Independent Clerk		PRESENT
Paul Gledhill	LA Finance		PRESENT
Julie Kelly	LA Executive Director, Children & Young People's Services		PRESENT
Dan Kennedy	LA Corporate Director, Central Services		PRESENT
Carole Lewis	LA		PRESENT
Gemma McNamara	LA Finance		PRESENT
Coral Miller	LA Finance		PRESENT
Philip Ryan	LA Early Years		PRESENT
Alison Vaughan	LA		PRESENT
<b>Observers</b>			
Patrick Grant	DfE		PRESENT
Michael Hawkins	LA		PRESENT

		ACTION
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES &amp; INTRODUCTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologies were accepted and recorded in the attendance list (above). The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.</li> <li>• Before commencing business, the Chair reported that Helen Manwaring’s term of office had expired in September 2022 and the nomination/election process for Academy Representatives had not been completed yet. The Forum <b>AGREED</b> that Helen would be a voting member for the purposes of this meeting.</li> <li>• The Chair advised that his term of office as chair expired at the end of the 2022/23 financial year, so this was his last meeting as chair. He did not intend to stand again and a new chair would be elected at the next meeting.</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><b>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023 were <b>AGREED</b> as a correct record of the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p><b>(a) TRAINING FOR SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERS</b></p> <p>This item had been on the agenda for over a year awaiting confirmation of dates from the LA Finance Team. The LA would provide a proposal for the next meeting.</p> <p><b>(b) SCHOOL PROVISION FOR ASYLUM SEEKER CHILDREN – FINANCING FOR SCHOOLS</b></p> <p>DK reported that the LA had been making strong representations to government regarding the significant impact on public services in Hillingdon as a result of the high number of asylum seekers placed there by the Home Office. No additional funding had been offered, however the Home Office had agreed to share asylum seekers more equitably across London by December 2023 which would reduce the pressure on Hillingdon. DK would arrange a meeting between the LA, Home Office and representatives from the most affected schools to discuss the issues for schools.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Forum member represented a school which had taken 75 asylum seeker children this year and had 38 leave, for whom the school would receive no funding. These children required intensive support which the schools had to provide from their existing resources. It was unacceptable that this financial pressure was being put on the budgets of a few affected schools.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DK/CM</b></p> <p><b>DK</b></p>
5.	<p><b>SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP &amp; CONSTITUTION</b></p> <p><b>(a) MEMBERSHIP UPDATE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was unclear whether the call for nominations for the three Academy Representative vacancies had gone out in December as the officer dealing with it had left the Council. DK would re-send the information to academies with a new closing date.</li> <li>• The LA continued to seek a second PVI rep.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DK</b></p> <p><b>PR</b></p>
6.	<p><b>FEEDBACK FROM SUB-GROUPS &amp; WORKING GROUPS</b></p> <p>The Forum noted the minutes of the following sub-groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Needs Funding Group – 9 March 2023</li> <li>• Early Years Funding Group – 8 February 2023</li> <li>• Early Years Funding Group – 27 February 2023</li> </ul> <p>The main item discussed at the Early Years Group was the Early Years Funding Formula, which appeared later on the agenda (see Minute 7c).</p>	
7.	<p><b>ITEMS FOR DECISION – DSG FUNDING SETTLEMENT 2023/24</b></p> <p><b>(a) SCHOOLS BLOCK DISTRIBUTION OF 0.5% TRANSFER</b></p> <p>The Secretary of State had approved the LA’s disapplication request to permit the 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, overturning the decision made by Forum at its last meeting. The Forum considered a report which set out the effect of the</p>	

	<p>0.5% transfer on the Schools Block Budget using Option 2 agreed by the Forum at its last meeting.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was not clear from the report how the figures for each school were arrived at, or the effect of the MFG.</li> <li>• The school with the biggest deficit had the greatest deduction, which did not seem right.</li> <li>• Officers advised that the calculation used a recognised formula, but acknowledged that Forum and schools wished to understand the detail of how the formula was worked out.</li> </ul> <p>The Forum <b>DEFERRED</b> the item pending provision of further details at the next meeting.</p>	<b>CM</b>
	<p><b>(b) HIGH NEEDS BUDGET 2023/24</b></p> <p>The Forum considered a report on the allocated 2023-24 High Needs Block Budget and the proposed use of the funding and commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report contained technical information which highlighted the urgent need for training for Forum members.</li> <li>• It was not clear from the report how funding would be calculated in accordance with the guidance.</li> <li>• Officers advised that the calculations used a recognised formula but acknowledged that Forum and schools wished to understand the detail of how the formula was worked out.</li> </ul> <p>The Forum <b>DEFERRED</b> the item pending provision of further details at the next meeting.</p>	<b>CM</b>
	<p><b>(c) EARLY YEARS BUDGET 2023/24</b></p> <p>The Forum considered a report on the Early Years Single Funding Formula for 2023/24. The Early Years Sub-Group had discussed the formula in detail at its meetings in February, and had received the results of a consultation with early years providers. The Sub-Group had agreed that a different method of calculating additional funding for SEND was needed, and had recommended Option 3 for distribution of the supplementary factors.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sub-Group had provided feedback to officers that the data did not appear to be correct, and it appeared to still be incorrect. Settings needed to record their SEND numbers to receive the additional funding, and some settings were still showing as having no SEND children.</li> <li>• Option 4 would be considered next year when data was stronger.</li> <li>• The recent government announcement regarding the expansion of 30 hours free entitlement would impact PVI's and risked the viability of some businesses. The changes would be introduced in stages by September 2025, when all children aged 9 to 36 months with working parents would be eligible for 30 hours free childcare.</li> </ul> <p>Having been put to a vote, the Forum <b>AGREED</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the proposal to increase the 2YO funding base rate per hour by £0.58 to £6.79 per hour;</li> <li>(ii) the base rate for 3 &amp; 4 year olds at £5.42, an increase of £0.36 per hour;</li> <li>(iii) to keep the Supplement at 10% which was equivalent to £0.60;</li> <li>(iv) Option 3 for distribution of the Supplement between Deprivation and SEN in 2023/24;</li> <li>(v) that Option 4 would be considered in the budget build process for 2024/25.</li> </ol>	
	<p><b>(d) SCHOOLS BLOCK MOBILITY BUDGET 2023/24</b></p> <p>The Forum considered a report on the Schools Block Mobility Budget for 2023/24 and commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At its last meeting, the Forum had agreed to limit mobility funding for schools which received a disproportionate amount, and had asked officers to look at previous years' information and check this was permitted within current funding rules. This had not been done.</li> <li>• The report provided the mobility budget for each school however it was necessary to see figures as a percentage to identify any outliers.</li> </ul> <p>The Forum <b>DEFERRED</b> the item pending provision of percentage figures.</p>	<b>CM</b>

8.	<b>INFORMATION ITEMS</b>	
	<p><b>(a) DSG BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 10</b>  The Forum considered a report on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) monitoring position which showed an in-year overspend of £6,705K at Month 10, compared to the revised budgeted deficit of £5,486K. The overspend was due to ongoing pressures in the cost of High Needs placements, where due to a lack of capacity in Borough, the number of independent placements had increased since the budget was set, in combination with inflationary pressures across the sector. When the £23,522K deficit brought forward from 2021/22 was taken into account, along with the second payment of Safety Valve funding and Local Authority contribution, the cumulative deficit carry forward to 2023/24 was £22,477K.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was concerning that there continued to be an overspend when the purpose of the Safety Valve Agreement was to reduce the deficit.</li> <li>• The LA had not completed its work to identify and calculate outstanding SEND payments, which could be a significant amount. The Forum asked whether the LA was confident that accurate provision had been made in the DSG to cover this. Officers advised that provision had been made based on known assumptions, and the LA would have an idea of the amount outstanding by year end. The LA would notify individual schools of the estimated amount so they could close their accounts. The priority was to correct 2022/23, then deal with previous years (see also Minute 8d).</li> </ul> <p><b>(b) SCHOOL BUDGET SURPLUSES &amp; DEFICITS 2021/22</b>  There was no report for this item so it was <b>DEFERRED</b> to the next meeting. The Forum requested that the report cover academy and maintained accounts 2021/22, and maintained 2022/23 if available.</p> <p><b>(c) SEND PUPIL PLACE PLANNING</b>  There was no report for this item so it was <b>DEFERRED</b> to the next meeting.</p> <p><b>(d) SEND PAYMENTS - DELAYS</b>  JK reported that the LA had put significant resource into resolving the outstanding payments and had brought in ten additional staff members to support this. Systems were being corrected to ensure the issue did not reoccur, and the LA aimed to resolve the matter by the next meeting. The Forum observed that it needed confirmation from the LA that this issue had been satisfactorily resolved to enable to Forum to have confidence in the DSG monitoring figures.</p> <p>The Forum commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This matter had been raised with the LA a considerable time ago, and had to be resolved urgently. Schools were suffering as a result of inaccurate payments. Parents were complaining about lack of resources, and schools could not fund the staff they needed. It was causing huge frustration in schools, and it was not clear that the LA appreciate the impact it was having on affected schools.</li> <li>• The payment errors coupled with the backlog of processing EHCPs was unacceptable. One Forum member represented a mainstream school which was awaiting 18 EHCP assessments, including pupils with significant needs who would benefit from specialist provision rather than mainstream. The school was having to support these pupils from their own budget pending the LA's completion of the assessment.</li> </ul> <p><b>(e) SAFETY VALVE AGREEMENT - PROGRESS</b>  DK reported that the Quarter 3 return had been submitted, and the end of Quarter 4 was approaching. The LA had carried out a healthcheck last month which showed the Plan was on track, with some areas of pressure and challenge around place planning due to contractor costs and delays. The Quarter 4 report would be produced by mid-May and Forum would receive a RAG-rated report.</p>	<p><b>PG</b></p> <p><b>JK</b></p> <p><b>DK</b></p> <p><b>DK</b></p>

	<p><b>(f) UKRAINIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN - FUNDING</b> The Forum considered a report on the support being provided to households living in Hillingdon who had been displaced by the conflict in Ukraine including the education support for children and how grant funding was being used to assist children to settle and integrate into schools. The Forum commented that it would be helpful to have a report in six months showing what schools actually received.</p> <p><b>(g) DfE 3.4% INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR ALL MAINTAINED SPECIAL SCHOOLS - METHODOLOGY</b> There was no report for this item so it was <b>DEFERRED</b> to the next meeting.</p> <p><b>(h) 3% MINIMUM FUNDING GUARANTEE FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS &amp; ACADEMIES</b> There was no report for this item so it was <b>DEFERRED</b> to the next meeting.</p>	<b>DK</b>
9.	<p><b>FOR NOTE – AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</b> The Chair observed that a number of items had been deferred to the next meeting either because there was no report available, or the report provided did not contain sufficient detail. The Forum requested that the reports for the next meeting contain practical information to enable the Forum to understand the issues and make decisions.</p>	<b>CM</b>
10.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> None.</p>	

The meeting closed at 2.40pm