

Meeting of the Schools Forum

Tuesday 23rd September 2008

(4.00 pm, Training Room 2, Building 2 at NLBP)

Attended

Members:

- Hazel Godfrey (Governor, Broadfields)
- Tim Bowden (Head, Holy Trinity)
- John Marincowitz (Head, QE Boys)
- Kate Webster (Head QE Girls)
- Angela Murphy (14-10 Partnership, Head Bishop Douglas)
- Alan Homes (NASUWT)
- Jodi Gurney (Head, Hampden Way)
- Helen Schmitz (Head, Cromer Road)
- Anthony Vourou (Governor, St John's N11)
- Johnathan Hewlings (Governor, East Barnet)
- Stephen Parkin (Governor, St Mary's High)
- Elizabeth Pearson (Governor, Livingstone)
- Anthea Aberly (Head, Rosh Pinah)
- Gilbert Knight (Governor, Oakleigh)
- Lynda Walker (Head, Oak Lodge)
- Mick Quigley (Principal Inspector, Children's Service)

LA Officers:

- Martin Baker (Acting Director of Children's Service)
- Carol Beckman (School Funding Manager)
- Linda Parker (Strategic Finance Manager)
- Denise Murray (Strategic Finance Manager)
- Nick Adams (School Finance Services Manager)

Consultant: Geoff Boyd

Observer Status: Hassan Shami (LSC Partnership Manager)
Angela Trigg (London Academy)

Clerk: Sarrosh Malik (School Resources & Support Officer)

Not Present

Members:

- Derrick Brown (Governor, Ashmole)
- Kevin Hoare (Head, Finchley Catholic)
- Jayne Franklin (Head, Childs Hill)
- Sarah Vipond (Middlesex Uni, PVI Full Day Care)
- Ken Huggins (Governor, The Compton)

Observers: Cllr Fiona Bulmer

Vacancies: Community Secondary Head
Academy Observer
Community Primary Head

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Fiona Bulmer, Ken Huggins, Jayne Franklin, Sarah Vipond.

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

AH nominated John Marincowitz for Chair, GK seconded.
JM accepted nomination – unanimously agreed.
Election of Vice Chair Stephen Parkin – unanimously agreed.

3. Minutes of previous meeting (1st July 2008)

The minutes were agreed. Proposer – JH, Seconded - EP

4. Matters Arising

Minute 3.2 (School Lunch Grant) – Funding allocations have been released. They have been distributed in the September Autopayment which was a week late. CB explained that two schools would not be receiving equipment funding as they have new kitchens.

Minute 3.3 (LSU) – On Agenda

Minute 3.4 (Membership of Schools Forum) – KW said there wasn't an accurate vacancy list at the Heads Meeting. JM suggested that the matter is taken back to the Secondary Heads Forum. MQ will follow up through the Heads Group.

**Action
MQ**

JM introduced Angela Trigg representing London Academy and asked about representation from Wren Academy. CB explained that both were contacted and we need at least one representative for the Academies.

Minute 3.5 (John Burgess) – JM said the matter had been resolved and was unanimously agreed upon by the forum.

Minute 6.2 (Thank You Card for Gillian Palmer) – JM said he can not produce a copy as he sent a hand written card.

5. Items for Agreement

5.1 Proposal for distribution of LSU funding 2008-11

5.1.1 CB explained that although there was informal agreement at the last Schools Forum meeting she was presenting a formal proposal for approval. The table showed the distribution excluding inflation.

AH asked if there was still an issue around meeting staffing costs and if the schools would be able to continue to operate the LSU. AM explained the schools would have to manage from their own resources. She said that having the distribution phased in would be a great help but there still would have to be reorganisations within the school. KW mentioned that other schools do not currently receive any funding.

CB explained that once funding for all schools is by per pupil, the element effectively becomes part of the AWPU. AM mentioned that the Heads group wanted it to be transparent. CB said this can be done. AM suggested it is taken this back to the Heads Forum.

The Schools Forum unanimously agreed on the proposal for distribution of LSU funding.

Proposer – AM Seconder - SP

6.1 Progress on Extending the Free Entitlement for 3 & 4 year olds

CB gave the feedback from the Early Years Working Group and presented a paper to the Schools Forum. CB explained that at present many PVIs are able to provide a longer day to meet the increased entitlement but most primary schools are not. AH said that the extra hours contravene teachers pay and conditions. CB explained providers have the freedom to decide how to arrange their day. We had been waiting for guidance from the DCSF, but it seems this is for local decision.

The EYWG has discussed the issue and some members are asking different LAs and nurseries for their ideas. EP said the main concern was how to maintain the quality if with different workers. AH pointed out that there would be significant contractual problems for staff and if nurseries are to be staffed by qualified teachers it would cost more.

MB talked about the increased entitlement for the most deprived 25% of children. He said the management of this needs to be agreed at the next meeting of the Schools Forum. CB said she has produced indicative budgets based on pupil projections which are available online. CB told the Schools Forum that there has been a consultation on costs in PVIS which is still accepting responses.

GB brought up the issue of funding on take up and not places. CB explained funding on pupil numbers would begin in April 2010 and in April 2009 schools will be funded on a combination of take up and places. CB said this issue will be brought up at the School Funding Conference in November. MB suggested bringing it up at the Primary Heads meeting.

6.2 School Balances at 31st March 2008

4.3.1 Following on from the last meeting NA presented more information on balances. He said 24 schools had been asked about balances and there are no claw backs required from any school. The current rules on claw back state that schools can hold 5%. NA mentioned that the Schools Forum can however change the rules on claw back if necessary.

NA asked 24 schools why their Standards Funds were unspent to which they said that they were being held for contingency. He said he has written to 16 schools which could expect potential claw backs.

SP asked for details of the 24 schools. NA said he could produce a summary for the next meeting. MB showed his concern about the fine details of individual schools' balances being discussed at the Schools Forum. AM agreed but was still concerned about Standards Funds being held as contingency. AM suggested that the problem may be because some Standards Funds are not allocated until March. NA said that he would look into this.

GB said that it is not acceptable to be showing 40% of Standards Funds still unspent. AM agreed and said after the analysis has been done the schools need to be questioned.

NA told the Schools Forum that they can revise the claw back percentage. JM said that more information will be needed. AM asked to see an analysis of previous years so it can guide the Forum to a decision. NA said it can be shown for the past 2 years.

6.3 Transfer of Funding from the Learning and Skills Council

MB presented a paper to the Schools Forum showing the relationship between the LA, LSC and Schools Forum. MB explained the Schools Forum may need a FE or sixth form member on the Schools Forum. MB suggested there might be a parallel colleges group to address interests of that group.

HS said there has been no clear direction from the DCSF and we need to make local decisions. He explained a lot of decisions for the 14-19 Partnership will need to be made locally or via a committee.

HS said the LA and DCSF have agreed strategy for 2009/10 which is being led by the LSC to prepare the London region for 2010.

6.4 Dedicated Schools Grant 2008/09 – Centrally Retained Budget

5.1.1 LP brought a paper to the Schools Forum. At the last Schools Forum meeting she said that the DSG was £426k less than predicted. The forum had agreed that the rolled forward underspend from 2007/08 would be used to offset this reduction and the LA would review centrally retained budgets to see how the remaining £180k could be met.

LP explained that after analysis there is an overspend against the Section 52 budgets and if the short fall is added the overspend would increase to £253k. These figures may change after we know the new pupil numbers after September. When the new intake is known then we will have a better projection of SEN costs. LP said she would come back with more up to date information.

JM was concerned that there will be a breach of the CEL once again. LP explained that it wouldn't mean a breach of the CEL in 2009/10. AM said every effort should be made not to overspend. MB said there will be a major review for 2009/10 for SEN. GB explained that it will inevitably put pressure on the 2009/10 CEL because of restrictions on ISB. LP said she did not agree.

JM described the long standing concern on SEN on behalf of all schools. MB explained that it is a challenge for everyone as education needs to be provided to young people with complex needs. GK added that inclusion is not a cheap option. JM said the issues are on the table.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 JM told the Schools Forum about the new school, JCROSS, opening in Barnet in 2010/11. MB said more information will be available to the Forum at the next meeting.

7. Dates of future meetings

Tue 9 th Dec 2008	4.30 pm
Tue 10 th Feb 2008	4.30 pm
Tue 12 th May 2008	4.30 pm