

DARLINGTON SCHOOLS FORUM

MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY 12TH JANUARY 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pete King (The Federation of Mowden Schools (in the Chair)); Richard Gartland (Education Village); Clare Devine (Beaumont Hill); Sarah Roberts (West Park Academy); Jennifer Moorhouse (Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle); Kay Kelly (Rise Carr College); Julia Thompson (Borough Road Nursery School); Michelle Charlton (Whinfield Primary); Paula Ayto (Reid Street Primary); Mike Shorten (Carmel College); Chris Peacock (Holy Family RC Primary School Academy); Dean Judson (Hurworth School); Mike Fryer (Hummersknott); Craig Alderson (High Coniscliffe C of E Primary School); Christine Large (St Johns C of E Academy); Emma Calvert (William House Nursery (PVI)), Paul Richardson (16-19);

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Rachel Kershaw (Head of School and Pupil Support Services); Eleanor Marshall (School Forum Monitoring and Support Officer); Chris Archer (Head of Early Years); Elaine Sayers (Finance Officer)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Cyndi Hughes (Lead Member Children and Young People); Neil Parker (George Dent Nursery School); Gavin Monument (AVEC Partnership)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Brett Nielsen (Finance Manager), Maura Regan (Carmel College), Catherine Thompson (West Park Academy), Ann Pringleton (Corporation Rd Community Primary), Sam Towle (DSMS), Susan Johnson (Longfield Academy), Adrian Crompton (Danesmoor Nursery)

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. A round of introductions took place.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest were expressed.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.

The minutes (previously circulated) of the schools Forum meeting held 6th October 2015 were agreed as a true record.

3. George Dent Nursery School

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. It was noted that as the EFA have now confirmed that the 2016/17 school funding policy arrangements are relatively unchanged, it is now possible to make a decision on the funding of the George Dent rent for 2016/17. It was pointed out that any decision made would be for 2016/17 only as there are no policy announcements on 2017/18 or beyond yet.

The options available that had been noted in the report were discussed and concerns were addressed.

The Forum agreed on option 3, whereby the 2016/17 rent of £13,000 will be funded through the School Specific Contingency or central Early Years budget.

4. Budget Update 2015/16

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. Changes to the 2015/16 budget projections, detailed in the report were pointed out.

It was asked that the Forum note the current budget position and an update will be provided at the March meeting.

5. High Needs Budget and SEN Placements

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. The School Forum Officer talked through the contents of the report.

It was asked that Forum note the position of the 2015/16 High Needs Budget and SEN placements.

6. School Funding Formula & Growth Fund 2016/17

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. The Chair went through the report, pointing out to Forum the changes and updates made to the School Funding Formula & Growth Fund for 2016/17.

The Forum agreed to the proposed funding formula for 2016/17 and the criteria for the operation of the growth fund in 2016/17.

7. SEN Funding Reforms Update

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. Forum were talked through the progress for the implementation of the new DFE SEN funding delegation limits.

Forum were asked to choose from three options to move towards the DFE's delegation limits.

The Forum agreed that as DfE have announced they are consulting on a national funding formula in Spring 2016, for implementation from 2017/18, option C, would be the agreed choice for 2016/17.

Work will continue on the collecting and refining data, but there will be no changes to the current system until the content of the national formula is known.

8. Budget Setting 2016/17

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. The Chair went through the report and highlighted the changes made to the budget since it was agreed at the October meeting.

It was also pointed out that the Home & Hospital note in the report (paragraph 16) has now been withdrawn. This budget requirement is to be revisited and will return to Forum at a later date.

The Forum agreed,

The top up rates detailed in the report for 2016/17.

The proposed early years funding rates for 2016/17.

The request to make a MFG exemption application to the EFA for the early years formula.

The budget allocations for 2016/17

9. School Forum Officer – Work Update

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. The School Forum Officer explained to the Forum the work undertaken on the review of the High Needs services and related activity.

It was asked that the Forum note the progress so far and they will be provided with a further update at the next meeting.

10. Social Communication Outreach Service

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report. The report provided the Forum with an update on the delivery of the Social Communication Outreach Service (SCOS) and recommendations in order for the service to continue to meet the needs of Darlington schools.

Four options were put forward for consideration and discussed.

It was decided that option 4 was the agreed option. i.e. SCOS to recruit a Co-ordinator enabling hands-on school management referrals, audit and quality assurance.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Date/Time/Location of next meeting

2pm Tuesday 8th March – Town Hall Committee Room 1