
MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY 10TH MARCH 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Peter King (Corporation Road Community School (in the Chair); Mike Fryer (Hummersknott); Sam Towle (Darlington School of Maths and Science); Paula Ayto (Reid Street); Brian Watkinson (The Federation of Mowden Schools); Craig Alderson (High Coniscliffe Church of England Primary School); Richard Gartland (Education Village); Clare Devine (Education Village); Elizabeth Charlton (PVI); Sarah Roberts (West Park Academy); Jennifer Moorhouse (Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle); Maura Regan (Carmel College); Kay Kelly (Rise Carr College); Christine Large (Diocese of Durham and Newcastle); Lynn Millar (Borough Road Nursery); Shirley Welsh (Whinfield Primary).

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Rachel Kershaw (Head of School and Pupil Support Services); Jenni Cooke (Service Director – Children, Families and Learning); Brett Nielsen (Finance Manager, Neighbourhood Services and Resources Group); Eleanor Marshall (School Forum Monitoring and Support Officer); Elaine Sayers (Finance Officer).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Hughes.

APOLOGIES

Dean Judson (Hurworth School), Catherine Thompson (West Park Academy), Susan Johnson (Longfield), Christine Boyce (St Teresa's RC Primary), Paul Richardson (16-19) & Lindsay Long (PVI)

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 expressed.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes (previously circulated) of the School Forum held 13th January 2015 were agreed as a true record.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Budget Update 2014/15

The Forum referred to a previously circulated paper. It was noted that as we are almost at year end the vast majority of the projected figures will be the final figures. However, there will still be changes to some spend and the Forum will be presented with the final 2014/2015 budget at the May meeting.

4. School Funding Formula/Budget 2015/16

The Forum referred to a previously circulated paper. The Finance Manager pointed out to the Forum that the school funding formula submitted to the Education Funding Agency in January complied with the regulations and criteria, therefore, there will be no change to the schools budgets for 2015/16.

Copyright Licences

The Forum referred to a previously circulated paper. It was noted that there is a shortfall in the estimated amount for copyright licences built into the 2015/16 budget. It will be decided at the May meeting how the funding for the increased licence costs will be met.

It was pointed out by the Finance Manager that as licences are procured by the EFA schools should not be paying for licences, unless they are specialist (i.e. outside of the centrally procured licenses).

5. Speech & Language Resource Base and Outreach Service – Northwood School

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report, the main facts of which were highlighted and discussed.

It has been noted that where children may be referred to the base, parents are reluctant to give up a school place in their home school, due to the uncertainty of being able to return their child to that school when they exit. This is often the result of class number restrictions and/or the lack of primary school places. The School Forum requested that the review of indicators include a summary of this position (ie children's home school vs children accessing the base admitted at Northwood School).

It was also noted that there is a growing trend that professionals are recommending that children attend a school because of the provision available, particularly at the Early Years. Attention was particularly drawn to the mapping of provision at Appendix 1. It was noted that the outreach service should be part of the continuum of provision to ensure that children with the greatest need are placed in the resource base.

The Forum commented on the high % of costs to run the service being allocated to premises costs but the Officer explained that the % was similar to other resource base budgets.

The SF agreed to a review of procedures for children accessing the base including whether a 'dual roll' position can be agreed. The SF officer explained there were likely to be financial implications that would need to be agreed with all schools and this will be presented at the next meeting.

The SF Officer explained there were actions to take forward with the Resource Base which should include the promotion of the outreach service, and a new model of training. It is suggested that lead Speech, Language and Communication 'champions' be identified in each school. Staff attending training will have the responsibility to cascade and impart knowledge and experience that schools adopt as a whole school approach. This ensures buy-in at the highest level, and a consistency of approach. This approach was noted as ensuring that the resource base and outreach is working with the children most in need, and at the right level.

It was recommended and agreed that a schools speech and language strategy be produced and presented to the next meeting with the purpose of schools@onedarlington to use as a reference point. It was noted this is the best way to enhance and co-ordinate universal provision and provide support at an earlier stage of language development.

6. Low Incidence Needs Service

The Forum referred to a previously circulated report, the main facts of which were highlighted and discussed. The current delivery position and benchmark indicators were noted which form a basis for monitoring.

The SF Officer explained there were actions to take forward with the service which form part of an improvement plan, including update of service information to feed into the Local Offer.

The School Forum noted the levels of support provided, which is the preference for all schools, it was noted that providers of 16-19 education do not immediately require more support than is already provided however it was noted that the demand may increase as indicated by data and the service need to build this into transition planning. This may affect the service model going forward.

The current specification was agreed not to be in need of radical change however it was agreed that through ongoing monitoring with the Executive Head of the LINS the SF Officer will develop delivery models which address these preferences and cost each model where appropriate.

7. Any Other Business

Service Reviews – School Forum agreed the Officer's work programme to include a review of the Social, Communication and Outreach Service (ASD), co-ordinated by Hurworth School.

School Transport - A request to part fund a post for discretionary subsidised home to school transport was put to the Forum. The cost would be £11,500.00 and would also be part funded by Hartlepool Council.

It was agreed that a paper would be put together and presented to the next Forum meeting in May.

Date of next meeting

19th May 2015

2pm Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Darlington