

# Nottingham City Council

## Schools Forum

**Minutes of the meeting held at Remote - To be held remotely via Zoom - <https://www.youtube.com/user/NottCityCouncil> on 10 October 2023 from 1.45 pm - 3.00 pm**

### Membership

- |                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ✓ Kerrie Fox (Chair)        | - PRUs                             |
| ✓ David Tungay (Vice Chair) | - Secondary Academies              |
| ✓ Kerrie Henton             | - AP Academies and Free Schools    |
| Debbie Simon                | - Early Years PVI                  |
| ✓ Judith Kemplay            | )                                  |
| ✓ Terry Smith               | ) Maintained Primary Head Teachers |
| ✓ Alison Tones              | )                                  |
| ✓ Patricia Lewis            | - Maintained Special Schools       |
| Laura Patel                 | - The Nottingham Nursery           |
| ✓ Meeta Dave                | )                                  |
| ✓ Tim Jeffs                 | ) Primary Academies                |
| ✓ Rob Perkins               | )                                  |
| ✓ Emma Howard               | )                                  |
| ✓ Andy Smith                | ) Secondary Academies              |
| Sandra Stapleton            | )                                  |
| ✓ Phil Willott              | - Special Academies                |
| ✓ Sheena Wheatley           | - Trade Unions                     |
| ✓ Adam Beazley              | - 14-19 Education                  |

✓ indicates present at meeting

### Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Kathryn Bouchlaghem | - Early Years Manager  |
| Collins Elechi      | - Senior Commercial Business Partner (Finance)                         |
| Julia Holmes        | - Senior Commercial Business Partner (Childrens and Education)         |
| James Lavender      | - Governance Officer   |
| Nick Lee            | - Director of Education Services                                       |
| Terry Shaw          | - Interim Strategic Finance Business Partner (Childrens and Education) |
| Janine Walker       | - Head of SEND and Vulnerable Pupils                                   |

### 1 Membership Change

Emma Howard and Sandra Stapleton have been appointed as Secondary Academy Representatives for the Forum.

Caroline Sheard has been replaced by Adam Beazley as the 14-19 Education Representative.

## **2 Appointment of Vice Chair**

**Resolved to appoint David Tungate as Vice Chair for the academic year 2023/24.**

## **3 Apologies for Absence**

Laura Patel  
Debbie Simon

## **4 Declarations of Interest**

None.

## **5 Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 June 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

## **6 Schools and High Needs funding update for 2024/25**

Julia Holmes, Senior Commercial Business Partner (Childrens and Education), presented the update into the Schools and High Needs funding for the 2024/25 academic year. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) on Friday 6 October, the Department of Education announced that they had miscalculated the Schools National Funding Formula (NFF) for the 2024/25 academic year. The number of pupils nationally had been underestimated, so the planned national increase of 2.7% in funding per pupil has been revised to 1.9%. This does not affect the Central Schools Services Block. The figures have been updated in the presentation to reflect this miscalculation;
- (b) the 2023/24 Mainstream Schools Additional Grant has been rolled into the schools NFF in 2024/25. The NFF factor values have been increased on top of the amounts that have already been added for the Mainstream Schools Additional Grant;
- (c) the Free School Meals (FSM) factor had been increased by 1.6%;
- (d) the basic entitlement, Low Prior Attainment (LPA), free school meals at any time in the last 6 years (FSM6), English as an additional language (EAL), income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI), mobility, and the lump sum factors have been increased by 1.4%;
- (e) Local Authorities (LAs) are expected to move their factor rates 10% closer to the NFF factor values. Nottingham City Council (NCC) mirrors the NFF but not all LAs do this;

- (f) the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) has been set at 0.5% per pupil;
- (g) the minimum per pupil levels (MPPL) have been increased by 1.4%. Primary schools will receive at least £4,610 per pupil and secondary schools £5,995 per pupil;
- (h) there has been no increase on the funding of premises factors except for the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) which has increased by Retail Prices Index excluding mortgage interest payments (RPIX) which is 10.4% for the year to April 2023 and split sites which has been formularised based on a national criteria;
- (i) there are new requirements for pupil growth funding. Funding is going to be allocated to LAs for falling rolls and a new criteria for allocating funding falling rolls funding has been introduced;
- (j) the Teachers' Pay Additional Grant introduced in September 2023 will continue in the financial year 2024/25. The grant will then be added into the schools NFF in the financial year 2025/26;
- (k) based on the illustrative funding allocations released by the Department of Education for 2024/25 on 6 October 2023, 37.3% of Nottingham City primary schools and 31.6% of our secondary schools will only be receiving an increase of 0.5% per pupil. This is a concern given that the proposed pay awards are likely to be higher than 0.5%;
- (l) the number of primary schools in the City of Nottingham in receipt of the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) has fallen by 13 from 2023/24 to 2024/25. The number of primary schools on the Schools NFF has increased by 13 from 2023/24 to 2024/25;
- (m) the largest increases in funding per pupil from the Schools Block can be found in primary schools;
- (n) the proposed approach to setting maintained schools and academies Individual School Budgets in the financial year 2024/25 will involve the removal of the one-off funding of £85 per pupil from schools baselines for the financial year 2023/24;
- (o) a new free school (Waterside Primary Academy) will be funding through the funding formula. It is due to open in September 2024;
- (p) the Council will endeavour to set the MFG as near to 0.5% as possible as in previous financial years;
- (q) if there is a shortfall when setting the 2024/25 Schools Block, the Council may propose to use some of the funding that is earmarked within the Statutory School Reserve as underspends on pupil growth in the financial years 2020/21 to 2022/23 (See Minute 32 of the Schools Forum minutes dated 27 June 2023);

- (r) regarding the Central Schools Services Block, there is no change to how central schools services funding for ongoing commitments is calculated in 2024/25. A further cut of 20% applied to historic commitments funding in 2024/25. This brings the total reduction in historic commitments funding between 2020/21 to 2024/25 to £3.740m;
- (s) NCC will receive an increase of 1.48% per pupil for ongoing responsibilities;
- (t) the £1.768m in funding for ongoing commitments in the Central Schools Services Block is based on October 2022 pupil numbers, but it will be updated to reflect the pupils on the October 2023 school census in December 2023. It will also include £29,000 in additional funding for copyright licences due to increased cost in 2023/24. This is based on a rate of £0.67 per pupil;
- (u) all LAs receive an increase of between 3% and 5% per head of the 2-18 population for 2024/25. Nottingham will receive the ceiling 5% increase which equates to an indicative £2.835m increase;

During the discussion and in response from questions from the Forum, the following points were raised:

- (v) as a result of the revised illustrative Schools NFF allocations being released on 6 October 2023 by the Department of Education, there will be £1.892m or £50 per pupil less in funding for all schools and academies in the city than originally forecast. The Department of Education's error in the funding calculations will be communicated to all schools and academies to make them aware of the impact on their budgets for 2024/25;
- (w) the Department of Education has stated that quality assurance checks will be introduced to make sure that these miscalculations never happen again;
- (x) schools are already making redundancies and this budget reforecasting will make it worse;
- (y) the Forum to express the distress and disappointment at the DFE's miscalculations within the Schools Funding;
- (z) the mistake in the calculation of the Schools NFF for the financial year 2024/25 was identified in September;
- (aa) there will be £50,000 less in funding per secondary schools and academies;
- (bb) a national response from Multi-Academy Trusts, Schools Forums, LAs, the Local Government Association (LGA) and the trade unions is required to express their frustration and anger at the Department of Education's mistake;
- (cc) the teaching union's pay award for school support staff was not fully funded. The fallout from the Department of Education's miscalculated figures will be discussed with the union's executive. There could be potential union action resulting from this.

**Resolved to:**

- 1. note the report;**
- 2. share the School Forum's position with Councillor Cheryl Barnard as the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education and to convey the Forum's position to the Government;**
- 3. LA to communicate with schools and academies about the miscalculations of the Schools National Funding Formula.**

**7 Proposed High Needs Place Changes 2024/25 Academic Year**

Collins Elechi, Senior Commercial Business Partner (Finance), presented the update into the proposed High Needs Place Changes for the 2024/25 academic year. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) not all schools and academies have been consulted, so these figures are a rough estimate. The consultation with the Schools Forum will be followed by consultation with the institutions involved. Current published high needs places;
- (b) under the current published high needs places for 2023/24, Nethergate Special Academy receives 10 extra places. Fernwood Primary receives 2 extra places and Denewood Academy receives 8. Nottingham College receives 20 extra places. Djangoly Strelley Academy receives 6 places as it is a new school. Bulwell Academy loses three places;
- (c) the total 2024/25 place change cost is £0.330m for additional 43 places, excluding top-ups;
- (d) the place numbers are subject to change when finalised in November;
- (e) the funding increase for 2024/25 will be subject to the outcome of our Special School funding review, which is in progress and conducted on a 4-yearly cycle;
- (f) the SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2023/28 has been approved by the Council's Executive Board on 19 September 2023. In due course, a paper will be brought to School's Forum outlining the Phase 1 capital developments for high needs places;
- (g) it is unlikely that any new provision will be completed during the 24/25 financial year, but should this be the case, a paper outlining provision and costs will be taken to the Schools Forum for consultation.
- (h) looking at potentially developing some early intervention provision at hospital and home education and expanding Early years SEND team;

During the discussion and in response from questions from the Forum, the following points were raised:

- (i) a request was brought to the Schools Forum at the June meeting to provide additional funding to Denewood Academy for those 8 places for 2023/24 (see Minute 33 of the minutes of the Schools Forum meeting of 27 June 2023);
- (j) there is data available by ward of the primary school pupils who are awaiting a specialist school place or from specialist support. This data is used by the Council to get focused support for pupils, to understand the nature of that support, and to enhance the specialist provision in secondary schools and in specialist schools;
- (k) a clinical diagnosis is not needed to access this support.

**Resolved to note the update.**

## **8 Early Years Supplementary Grant and Extension of Entitlements**

Collins Elechi delivered the report into the Early Years Supplementary Grant and the extension of entitlements. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) the Government announced in the Spring Budget 2023 that an additional £204m will be made available through an Early Years Supplementary Grant (EYSG) and as part of the wider Dedicated Schools Grant;
- (b) the EYSG is to be used to increase the hourly rates paid to LAs so that they can increase the amount of funding which their early years childcare providers receive to deliver the existing entitlements from 1 September 2023 to 31 March 2024;
- (c) the funding is to be delivered to disadvantaged 2-year olds, universal entitlement for 3- and 4-year olds, additional entitlement to 3- and 4-year olds of working parents, Maintained Nursery Schools Supplementary Funding, the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and the Disability Access Fund;
- (d) the EYSG will provide an additional £669,000 in funding to NCC schools and PVI's. The hourly rate will increase for the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year olds from £5.66 per hour to £7.46 per hour. For all providers in receipt of funding for the universal and additional entitlements for 3- and 4-year olds, the hourly rate will increase from £4.96 to £5.01. The EYPP will increase to 66p per hour;
- (e) the Early Years Entitlements phased rollout will begin in April 2024 and carry on through to September 2025;
- (f) the supplementary grant was included in the autumn payment to NCC providers;
- (g) the Government has committed another £12m nationally to support EY Teams across the country as they prepare for the expansion of early years entitlements from April 2024. LA allocation announcements are expected in October 2023.

**Resolved to note the report.**

**9 Constitution/membership**

James Lavender, Governance Officer, updated the Forum with changes to the Constitution of the Schools Forum, notably that the constitution should be reviewed annually in September with a view to implement any changes in the following October.

**Resolved that the Schools Forum Constitution, as attached to the agenda, be approved.**

**10 Date of the next meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting will be held remotely via Zoon, and livestreamed on YouTube, at 1:45pm on Tuesday 5 December 2023.