

## EAST SUSSEX SCHOOLS' FORUM

MINUTES of a meeting of the Schools' Forum held remotely with Microsoft Teams on 12 January 2024

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### MEMBERS

#### Primary

Richard Blakeley (Harlands Primary)  
Laura Cooper (St John's CE School)  
Vicky Anderson (Catsfield CEP School)

#### Primary Governors

Debra Vice Holt (Oak Tree Federation)  
Peter Hughes (South Malling Primary School)

#### Secondary

Emily Winslade (Priory School)  
Helen Key (Chailey School)

#### Secondary Governors

Monica Whitehead (Claverham community College)

#### Academies

James Freeston (King Offa Primary Academy) **Chair**  
Gavin Bailey (Swale Academy Trust)  
Kelly Johnson (UoBAT)  
Zoe James (MARK Education Trust)  
Sally Hill (Aquinas Trust)  
Richard Preece (Saxon Mount and Torfield)

#### Pupil Referral Unit

Jo Foulkes (Sabden Multi Academy Trust)

#### Non School Members

Joanna Sanchez (Diocese of Arundel and Brighton)  
Jon Gilbert (Diocese of Chichester)  
Hannah Caldwell (Post 16 East Sussex College Group)

#### ESCC representatives

Cllr Bob Standley (Lead Member for Education and Inclusion,  
Special Educational Needs and Disability)  
Alison Jeffery (Director Children's services)  
Elizabeth Funge Assistant Director Education  
Honor Green (BSD Finance)  
Nathan Caine (HofEd SEND & Safeguarding)  
Edward Beale (Acting Finance Manager - Childrens Services)  
Sarah Rice (Finance Manager - Schools)  
Kirsten Coe (Schools Funding Manager - Acting)  
Rachel King (Clerk)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES (Note)

1.1 It was confirmed the meeting was quorate, recognising the apologies below.

Laura Cooper - (St John's CE School)  
Hannah Caldwell - (16-19 East Sussex College Group)

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 17 November 2023 (Approval)

2.1 The minutes for the meeting held were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chair and scanned to clerk.

3. MATTERS ARISING AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Discussion)

3.1 Matters arising - none  
Declarations of interest - none.

4. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget 2024/25 (Information)

4.1 Members were provided an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget for 2024/25 and asked to note the DSG allocations for the schools, central school services block, high needs, and early years.

4.2 It was asked what the fund was last year that has been included in the Schools Block this year. This was a mainstream additional grant, that the DfE decided to add to the Schools Block.

4.3 It was also asked if schools have been notified of money being transferred back from the Central School Services Block and the answer was not yet, comms will be sent out to notify schools.

4.4 In reference to the school's block funding it was asked that as NOR have fallen, does the LA feel that schools will be able to manage the changing numbers in the future. For example, ensuring PAN's are appropriate. Members were directed to the school organisation plan.

**Action:** Link to be sent by email to members.

5. Overview of High Needs Top up funding review (Information)

5.1 At the last meeting there was a request for volunteers for a working group to look at High Needs top up funding proposals. Members were provided with more information on this piece of work.

5.2 A presentation was shown to explain the comparison between East Sussex and national data, with specific reference to the most significant cost drivers in the system.

5.3 Schools' forum were asked to:

- Agree to the principles that were set out for future funding.
- Agree the two phases and uplifts for 2024/25.
- Schools' forum delegate the high needs working group to communicate any uplifts to schools and to bring back proposals to next schools' forum.

5.4 There were no objections to the proposals of the working group. Approval was given. Volunteers were thanked for being part of the group. It was suggested that it would be useful to include comparative overall rise of EHCP's

**Action:** Presentation to be sent by email to forum members.

6. DSG Budget 2024/25 (Approval, all forum members)

6.1 Schools Forum were asked to note the changes to the early years education entitlements as a result of the government’s early years funding reforms. There are a number of additions/changes made and these will take effect in stages from April 2024 to 2025.

Members were requested to vote and approve the early years DSG budget. Results as below.

Number voting ‘Yes’	Number voting ‘No’	Number of Abstentions
13	0	0

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Schools’ Forum forward plan was sent out with public reports pack. It shows key standing items where decisions may need to be discussed with colleagues prior to the meetings. As it is a new document, members were asked that if there are any suggestions or changes, they would like to see on the document. It was asked if the forward plan can be a live document and sent out when there are updates to agenda items.

Meeting concluded at 09:34 am  
Next meeting - Friday 10 May 2024 08:30am. To be held on Microsoft Teams