

## Attendance

### Members of the Schools' Forum

Karen Preston (Chair)	Academies Sector Representative
Daryl Asbury	Academies Sector Representative
Rachael Brown	Pupil Referral Unit Headteacher Representative
Linda Campbell	Nursery Sector Governors Substitute
Louisa Craig	Academies Sector Representative
Ben Davis	Academies Sector Representative
Claire Foster	Nursery Sector Substitute
Gary Gentle	Diocesan Representative Substitute
Susan Lacey	Nursery Sector Head Teacher Representative
James Ludlow	Secondary Sector Headteacher Representative
Carroll McNally	Non-School Member Diocesan Schools Representative
Ian Moore	Academies Sector Representative
Bhaksho Raj	Academies Sector Representative
Graham Tate	Academies Sector Representative
Samantha Walker	Primary Sector Headteacher Representative
Lisa-Anne Westwood	Academies Sector Representative
Sarah Whittington	Special School Sector Head Teacher Representative
Phil Williams	Academies Sector Representative

### Observers

Bill Hague	Head of Business and Support Services
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

### In Attendance

James Barlow	Senior Accounting Officer
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer
Terry Shaw	Finance Manager

*Item No.*      *Title*

1            **Welcome and Introductions**

2            **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Schools' Forum members: Stephen Smith, Zoe Rollinson, Lucia Jayne Turner.

Apologies were also received from Emma Bennett.

3 **Declaration of Interest or Confidentiality**

There were no declarations of interest or confidentiality.

4 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting - 3 December 2020**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of 3 December 2020 be approved as a correct record.

5 **Matters Arising**

A query was raised in respect of funding arrangements for maintained nurseries and Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support Services advised that the issue had been resolved for this financial year. This was not a permanent arrangement however a long-term solution was still being explored.

6 **Schools' Forum Membership 2020-2021**

Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support Services presented the Schools' Forum Membership 2020 – 2021 and reported there had been no updates on membership since the last meeting of Schools' Forum. Assurances were offered that steps were continually being taken to fill vacancies.

Resolved:

That the Schools' Forum Membership 2020 – 2021 update be noted.

7 **Schools' Forum Forward Plan 2020 - 2021**

Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support Services presented the Schools' Forum Forward Plan 2020 – 2021 and highlighted future agenda items. It was reported that the document would be refreshed for 2021 – 2022 and provided at the next meeting of Schools' Forum.

Schools' Forum members were invited to suggest any items they wished to receive at future meetings by contacting either Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support Services or Shelley Humphries, Democratic Services Officer.

Resolved:

That the Schools' Forum Forward Plan 2020 – 2021 be noted.

8 **High Needs Sub-Group Update**

In her capacity as Chair of the High Needs Sub-Group, Sarah Whittington provided a verbal update on work undertaken by the group since the last meeting.

A working group had been established to drive forward the work around Penn Hall Residential, which would be fed back to Schools' Forum.

A matrix review sampling had been completed on 10 December 2020 led by Sandy Lisle, SENSTART Manager. Over 100 samples of education, health and care plans (EHCPs) were taken against the new draft of the matrix descriptors; all educational settings were represented as well as Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), colleges, mainstream and special settings.

A great deal of positive feedback came from this exercise which was fed through to the High Needs Matrix Sub-Group of the High Needs block. Amendments were

currently being made to the descriptors following this. Sandy Lisle, SENSTART Manager had been working on reporting in terms of the transition from the current matrix banding to the proposed framework and a time frame of three years had been proposed; further detail would be reported to Schools' Forum in due course.

It was reported that Sandy Lisle, SENSTART Manager would soon be retiring from the Authority after a long period of service and sincere thanks were expressed on behalf of Schools' Forum for her hard work and efforts over the years.

It was acknowledged that Elaine Shepherd, Service Group Co-ordinator would also be retiring from the Council. Thanks were expressed to her for all her hard work and it was noted that she would be greatly missed.

Resolved:

1. That the High Needs Sub-Group Update be received.
2. That a further update on matrix descriptors be provided to Schools' Forum when available.

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### **Dedicated Schools Grant and School Funding 2021 - 2022**

Terry Shaw, Finance Manager presented the Dedicated Schools Grant and School Funding 2021 – 2022 report and delivered a presentation to support. The report sought to inform Schools' Forum of the anticipated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement for 2021-2022 and the proposed local funding formula for the Schools Block in Wolverhampton.

The Department for Education had published the Dedicated Schools Grant for all four blocks: Schools' Block (£223.89 million), Central Schools and Services Block (£2.09 million), High Needs Block (£46.92 million) and Early Years Block (£18.83 million) totalling £291.73 million for the Council in 2021 – 2022.

An outline was provided of how the National Funding Formula had been applied as approved by Schools' Forum back in January 2020 and how funding had been allocated block by block. Appendix 1 supplied the funding factors included in the proposed 2021-2022 local factors and 2020-2021 rates for comparison. A list of schools and their forecast budget share under the proposed local funding formula was provided at Appendix 2.

Schools' Forum members were advised that a comprehensive breakdown of High Needs, Early Years and Central Services Blocks budgets would be provided at the meeting of Schools' Forum scheduled for 25 February 2021.

Resolved:

1. That the anticipated DSG settlement for 2021-2022 be noted.
2. That Schools' Forum endorse and recommend to Cabinet the proposed national funding formula (NFF) and note the resulting growth fund and budget allocations to schools in Wolverhampton.
3. That Schools' Forum agree the proposed rates for de-delegation from maintained schools for 2021-2022.
4. That Schools' Forum agree the proposed rates for maintained schools' contribution to Education Functions for 2021-2022.
5. That it be noted that Schools' Forum will receive further reports in February 2021 detailing the breakdown of High Needs, Early Years and Central

Services Blocks budgets along with a Schools Block report detailing final school budget shares.

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**Any Other Business**

Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills wished to express his gratitude for the work done by all headteachers, teaching staff and everyone else working in schools, especially following the announcements to keep schools closed to all but vulnerable children and children of keyworkers following the Christmas break.

All were commended for offering as much normality as was possible under the circumstances and it was agreed these thanks should be communicated on behalf of Schools' Forum to everyone leading, teaching and working in educational settings across Wolverhampton on behalf of Schools' Forum via an email. Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support Services agreed to ensure this was done.

In response to a query around what data the nursery funding had been based on, it was noted that there was no definitive answer as yet however discussions were ongoing and an update on any decisions would be communicated via a bulletin.

Resolved:

1. That Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support Services communicate thanks to all those leading, teaching and working in educational settings across Wolverhampton on behalf of Schools' Forum via an email.
2. That a further update on maintained nursery funding be shared via a bulletin once available.

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**Dates for future meetings**

25 February 2021