

Slough Schools Forum- Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd October, 2012

Present: Maggie Waller, Holy Family Primary School (Chair)
Julia Shepard, Beechwood Secondary School (Vice-Chair)
Barbara Clark, Godolphin Junior School
John Constable, Langley Grammar
Helen Huntley, Special Schools
Maureen Mallinson, Westgate Secondary School
Paul McAteer, Slough and Eton Secondary School
Jon Reekie, James Elliman Primary School
Mary Sparrow, Wexham Secondary School
Maggie Stacey, St Anthony's RC Primary School
Jo Rockall, Herschel Grammar School
Virginia Barrett, East Berkshire College
Lynda Bussley, NUT (Observer)
Jean Cameron, Slough Children's Centres
Philip Gregory, Slough Centre Nursery
Jo Matthews, Littledown School

Observers: Lynda Bussley, NUT

Officers: Robin Crofts, Michelle Perkins and Wendy Sagar

Apologies: Kevin O'Driscoll, St Joseph's School

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157. Apologies

Apologies were received from Father Kevin O'Driscoll, St Joseph's School.

158. Declarations of Interest

None.

159. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Robin Crofts confirmed that he is meeting with Ruth Bagley week commencing 8th October to discuss proposals for schools funding reform and will be taking it to CMT for endorsement by SBC. He will also discuss concerns from Schools Forum about Members and CMT's awareness of the true impact of the reforms and awareness of potential turbulence. Robin Crofts will talk to Cllr Natasa Pantelic about attending Schools Forum.

Robin Crofts told Schools Forum that Claycots has been confirmed as a split-site as per discussion in the last meeting.

It was noted that proposals for the future structure of the Finance Department in SBC have not been circulated to schools. The consultation closes on 16th October. It was agreed that Maggie Waller will write an email response to the consultation and Schools Forum confirmed that they are happy for their concerns regarding ongoing financial support for schools to be outlined.

Jo Matthews asked for clarification regarding the £70,000 to be set aside for PRU activities at Littledown. It was agreed that the matter is to be discussed outside of the meeting and referred to the next meeting of SSEF on 12th October.

It was agreed that the matter regarding the £30,000 allocated to the three free school proposer groups needs to be reviewed by Schools Forum at a later date when Free School sites are confirmed. It was noted that the groups will be asked to provide information regarding spend at the appropriate time. It was agreed that these allocations are a one off and will not set a precedent for future Free Schools. It was agreed that the LA should contact each group to ask for confirmation that the school is providing places in Slough for Slough children.

Members asked for an update on St Joseph's. It was confirmed that the money allocated to them would support their financial stability over the next 3-5 years.

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

160. Implementation of DfE Funding Reform: Notional Schools Block - update on progress (verbal)

Wendy Sagar provided a verbal update on progress and confirmed that the consultation, which closes on 11th October has gone out to Headteachers, Governors and Bursars. There have been two consultation meetings so far with approximately 25 people in attendance. The work is all in progress and the DfE has now confirmed further details of future arrangements. The outcome to date is that the overall DSG for Slough will be reduced due to the ending of inter-authority recoupmnt and a top-slice for hospital provision.

161. Implementation of DfE Funding Reform: Notional Early Years Block

Schools Forum noted the notional Early Years Block analysis and changes arising from funding reform and the extension of free early education to disadvantaged 2 year olds.

Schools Forum endorsed the following:

- An additional provider type 'Academy' within the Slough Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) at the same rates as the provider type 'primary'.
- Provider specific lump sums as a short term position.
- Hourly rates for supplements as a short term position.
- Base hourly rates equivalent to current staffing rates for EYSFF MFG purposes.

In addition to this Wendy Sagar explained that nursery schools' currently receive additional funding for factors relating to previous grants through the 5-16 formula (see 5.12 of the report). Schools Forum agreed that this needs to be discussed further in the Task and Finish Group .

Schools Forum agreed to establish an Early Years Task and Finish Group as mentioned above. Wide representation from PVI is needed on the group along with representatives from nursery schools, primary schools and academies. Jean Cameron will write to the PVI and Michelle Perkins will write to the other representatives to look at setting up the group to have a meeting in November. Financial input will be essential to lead this but Officers are not currently in a position to confirm who will be providing this.

162. DfE Consultation: Extension of free early education entitlement to two year olds

The consultation response was endorsed by Schools Forum and it was noted that it is a joint response from SBC and Schools Forum. Paul McAteer enquired about the 500 Slough school children eligible for free school meals mentioned in 5.4 of the report as this figure appears to indicate an increase. Jean Cameron explained that the figure is based on a growing population. Members asked about long term trends. Robin Crofts will ask Tony Browne for any available data. Jean Cameron also referred to new data recently published by the Child Poverty Group.

163. Implementation of DfE Funding Reform: Notional High Needs Block

Wendy Sagar took members through the report which outlined the Notional High Needs Block. Schools Forum noted the arrangements and agreed that it needed to be kept under review as per the recommendations. It was noted that although it is helpful to consider each block individually it is essential to maintain the overview and the impact of one block on another.

Schools Forum noted the three key implementation tasks that need to be undertaken:

- i) Mainstream pre-16 formula funding, including Notional SEN budget – final decision to be taken end of October.
- ii) Places in specialist SEN and AP settings – DfE due to confirm on 4th Oct whether they accept the submission. If they accept the number of places it is anticipated that they will agree the funding.
- iii) Reworking budgets – work has started on PRU and special schools but work has not started on resource units, this needs to come back to Schools Forum.

Wendy Sagar added that additional transitional protection will be put in place. This matter is to come back to Schools Forum at a later date.

Robin Crofts enquired about the table on page 29 of the report and Wendy Sagar explained that the EFA funding should follow the number of places. It was noted that the table reflects the clear policy which has successfully decreased the number of expensive out borough placements and increased local provision.

Discussion took place around post 16 students with high needs and Virginia Barrett outlined how East Berkshire College has responded recently to requests for data from Slough and other LAs. Paul McAteer suggested that the transitional aspect of this can be looked at in the forthcoming Headteachers' Conference.

164. Academies Update (verbal)

Robin Crofts gave Schools Forum a verbal update on Academies as follows:

There will be a new Free School application round in December / January and there are two possible submissions known of at the moment.

There are currently 16 Academies in Slough and there could be another 6 over the next 6 months, including Willow.

Robin Crofts and Julian King-Harris are meeting with the DfE. With regard to any sponsorship arrangements, SBC is keen to find local solutions and build on the strong infrastructure of support across Slough schools rather than looking for external solutions.

165. Updated Work Programme 2012/12 and dates of future meetings

Schools Forum noted that the meeting scheduled for 21st November 2012 will now take place on 14th November 2012.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 8:15am and closed at 10:40am)