

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

17th March 2022 at 10:00 – 12:00
Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Multi Academy Trusts

Catalyst Academies Trust
Harris Federation
Ormiston Park
ORTU Federation
Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust
REAch2 Academy Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust
The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)
Vine Schools Trust
Christus Catholic Trust

Name

Mr T Parfett
Mrs N Graham
To be advised
Dr Sophina Asong
Mr Griffiths
Mr E Samuel
Mr S Munday
Mr K Sadler
Mrs E Wigmore
Mrs J Seymour

Secondary Voluntary Aided School

Grays Convent

Name

Mrs P Johnson

Standalone Academy Trusts

Woodside Academy
Giffards Primary

Name

Mr E Caines
Mrs N Haslam-Davis

Infrastructure Groups

TASS
TPHA

Name

Mr S Bell
Mrs P Black

Alternative Provision

Olive AP

Name

Mr M Vickers

Special Schools

Treetops Academy
Beacon Hill Academy

Name

Mr J Brewer
Mrs Sue Hewitt

Non-school members

Diocese of Chelmsford
Diocese of Brentwood
0-5 EYFS Representative
0-11 Representative
11-19 Representative

Name

Miss S Jones
Mrs M Shepherd
Mr A Melbourne
Ms Alison Jones
Dr J Revell

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

Introductory Items		
Item	Item	Time Guide
1.	Welcome from Chair	10:00
2.	Apologies for Absence	10:02
3.	Agreement of agenda, time-guide and notification of 'Any Other Business'	10:03
Items for Decision		
4.	<p style="text-align: center;">Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22 and 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by David May 	10:05
5.	<p style="text-align: center;">Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2021/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update and presentation by David May 	10:25
Items for Discussion		
6.	<p style="text-align: center;">ESFA Consultations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update presented by David May 	10:50
7.	<p style="text-align: center;">Thurrock Budget – Children's Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update and presentation by David May 	10:55
8.	<p style="text-align: center;">Education offer for SEND pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update presented by Malcolm Taylor 	11:05

THURROCK SCHOOLS' FORUM

9.	Pupil Place Planning Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by Sarah Williams 	11:15
10.	Outcomes of Disadvantaged Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral update presented by John Revill/Dr Asong 	11:25
11.	Schools' Forum Forward Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented by Sarah Williams 	11:35
Closing Items		
12.	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th January 2022	11:40
13.	Matters Arising	11:45
14.	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	11:50
	Date of next meeting Thursday 23 rd June 2022 – Virtual via MS teams	

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE: 17 March 2022
SUBJECT: Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22 and 2022/23
REPORT OF: David May
THE REPORT IS: For Decision

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The DSG 2021/22 current forecast is a deficit of £0.760m, an increase of £0.348m.
- 1.2 The DSG reserve outturn position would therefore increase the deficit to £2.643m.
- 1.3 The High Needs Block remains the area of significant financial risk, especially with the continuous increase in EHCP's and the additional costs of out of borough placements. Officers produced a High Needs Block Budget for 2022/23 reflecting the most up to date information available in January. This will be updated on finalisation of the 2021/22 outturn position and an updated report will be prepared for the June meeting.
- 1.4 The report provides an update of the proposed use and distribution of the HNB Additional Resources for 2022/23.
- 1.5 Officers continue to update the DSG Management Plan, a presentation will be made at the meeting on the latest information available. This will continue to be developed to facilitate discussions with the ESFA. A further update will be provided at the next meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The School's Forum is recommended to:
 - a) Note the contents of the report and offer support and challenge.
 - b) Consider the 2021/22 outturn position and discuss options to contain continued increase in HNB expenditure in 2022/23
 - c) Consider and approve the proposed distribution of £670 per pupil for Special and AP Schools consistent with that to be paid to Mainstream schools and academies in 2022/23.
 - d) Approve the updated band values (Appendix B) to be applied from September 2022.
 - e) Consider the DSG Management Plan as part of information to be presented at the meeting.

3. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2021/22 PROJECTED OUTTURN

3.1 The current projected outturn for 2021/22 is an overspend of £0.760m, an increase of £0.348m.

ESFA Updated information 27-01-22					Schools Forum - March 2022		
2021/22	Funding Settlement	Academy Recoupment	Funding Block Transfer	Early Years Adjustment	Final DSG	Outturn	Variance
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Schools	140.936	(135.075)	(0.673)	0.000	5.188	4.520	(0.669)
Central Services	1.783	0.000	(0.200)	0.000	1.583	1.553	(0.030)
High Needs	28.092	(5.606)	0.873	0.000	23.359	24.583	1.224
Early Years	11.985	0.000	0.000	0.136	12.120	12.355	0.235
Total	182.796	(140.680)	0.000	0.136	42.251	43.011	0.760

3.2 Schools Block

The growth fund allows officers to ensure sufficiency of places within Thurrock schools for all children of school age. Based on current commitments and historic level of spend it is currently forecasted an underspend of £0.669m, a decrease of £0.073m.

3.3 Central Services Block

A projected underspend of £0.030m through a combination of salary slippage and savings in venue hire for Schools Forum meetings.

3.4 High Needs Block

This is the significant area of financial risk and can be broken down into the following key areas:

- The continued increase in the number of EHCP.
- The Post-16 position reflects 32 new places from September, 13 of which are placed in Independent Schools at a cost of £1m.
- Residential and Non-Residential Non-Maintained and Independent placements continuing to increase but can be contained within the funding allocation.
- Increase in supplying tuition packages for pupils not in School, costing £0.600m, a £0.300m overspend.
- Increase in additional target support costing £0.271m, a £0.171m overspend. This area includes include mediation services, behaviour clinics, therapy centres and some alternative educational provisions.

The inward migration of families with Special Educational Needs continues to place significant pressures on the budget, with the identification of school and specialist places and where this cannot be achieved tuition and targeted support.

A review of the local offer and commissioned places available in Thurrock continues. The need to challenge schools on the use of the Notional SEN budget and the requirement to progress to an EHCP remains.

3.5 Early Years Block

A risk remains in Early Years, final DSG allocation will not be received from ESFA until July 2022. Current projections show an overspend of £0.235m, a reduction of £0.050m reflecting additional funding received for 2020/21 and projected funding based on census information. The outturn position includes providers being paid 39 weeks with a cost implication of £0.180m.

4. DSG RESERVE

4.1 The DSG has a projected carried forward deficit of £2.643m into 2022/23, as reflected in the table below:

DSG Deficit - Summary	£m	Deficit % of DSG
Deficit @ 31/03/2020	(1.978)	
DSG 2020/21	0.095	
Deficit @ 31/03/2021	(1.883)	1.12%
DSG 2021/22	(0.760)	
DSG Deficit to be C/fwd. into 2022/23	(2.643)	1.45%

4.2 Thurrock's ongoing problem is how to recover the deficit position whilst continuing to meet increased demand and cost within the High Needs Block. This position reflects that being experienced by a significant number of Local Authorities. Information gathered by the Local Government Association found that 97% of Local Authorities expected their HNB to be in deficit. In June 2021, the County Councils Network and the Society of County Treasurers claimed top-tier councils' SEND deficits were set to balloon to an "unmanageable" £1.3bn by 2022-23.

5. DSG MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021/22

5.1 The DSG conditions of grant requires that any LA with an overall deficit on its DSG account, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must be able to present a plan to the Department for Education (DfE) for managing their future DSG spend.

5.2 The DSG Management Plan 2021/22 was discussed at the November meeting, an updated version will be presented at this meeting.

6. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2022/23

- 6.1 On 17 December, the Secretary of State for Education announced details of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2022/23, as shown in the table below:

Dedicated Schools Grant	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	Increase
			Add Grant		
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Schools	140.936	146.520		146.520	5.584
Central Services	1.783	1.688		1.688	(0.096)
High Needs	28.091	31.455	1.234	32.689	4.598
Early Years	12.877	10.734		10.734	(2.143)
Total	183.688	190.397	1.234	191.631	7.943

- 6.2 The key changes made by the ESFA to the National Funding Formula (NFF) in 2022/23 are:

- The core factors in the NFF will increase by 3%.
- The funding floor will ensure that every school is allocated at least 2% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared to 2021-22 allocation.
- The minimum per pupil funding levels will increase by 2%. This will mean that, next year, every primary school will receive at least £4,265 per pupil and every secondary school at least £5,525.

- 6.3 The funding allocations are consistent with the national methodology used in 2021/22. No significant additional funding had been allocated to the High Needs Block to address funding gaps being experienced by the majority of Local Authorities. This is necessary if a hard National Funding Formula is to be adopted.

- 6.4 The High Needs Block increase in 2022/23 of £4.598m is welcome and reflects the change in methodology consulted on earlier in the year that was favourable to Thurrock and the additional funding in respect of the Health and Social Care Levy of £1.234m. However, the number and complexity of EHCP's continue to increase and future budgets will need to reflect the associated increase in costs.

- 6.5 The decrease to the Early Years Block is based on Jan-21 census that was significantly impacted upon by Census. Since then numbers on census have increased. The funding allocation for 2022/23 will be based on Jan-22 Census (5/12) and Jan-23 Census (7/12). An increase in census will increase the funding to be received.

7. SCHOOLS BLOCK

- 7.1 The final APT and Schools budgets 2022/23 was submitted to the ESFA on 20th January. On 16 February the ESFA confirmed adherence to the finance regulation and proforma appear to meet the required criteria.

8. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK

- 8.1 In 2022/23 High Needs Block funding has an allocation of £32.689m, an increase of £4.598m. The 2022/23 budget was presented and approved by the Schools Forum in January. The latest projection shows an increased overspend within 2021/22. Officers in June will present the Outturn position, alongside the DSG Management Plan and consider implications and options for 2022/23.
- 8.2 Officers continue to work through the detail of the 2022/23 budget. Detailed information will be presented at the meeting of the School Forum for approval.

High Needs Block Supplementary Grant

- 8.3 At the January meeting Officers were tasked with developing proposals for the HNB Supplementary grant and options consistent with the value to be received by Mainstream Schools and Academies.
- 8.4 School-level allocations will be published in spring 2022. The following funding rates will be applied:

Thurrock Indicative Supplementary Grant 2022/23					
2022/23 School supplementary grant: indicative allocation					£4.313m
2022/23 High Needs additional DSG funding					£1.234m
The following rates will be paid:					
	Early Years (Schools)	Primary	KS3	KS4	Post-16
Basic per-pupil rate	£24	£97	£137	£155	£35
FSM 6		£85	£124	£124	

- 8.5 Representation nationally has been made to the DfE, for values on how this should be allocated for Special and AP schools through the High Needs Block. The department have responded that they do not intend to put such conditions on the grant. They have said this is primarily because they believe it should operate in the same way as National Funding Formula funding.
- 8.6 Thurrock however believes that some element needs to be paid to Special and AP provisions, consistent with amounts paid to Mainstream Schools and Academies. The method of distribution funds for the Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant (TPECG) and Teacher Pay Grant (TPG) in 2021/22 has been considered.

- 8.7 The following table shows the values distributed for TPECG and TPG and proposals for the Supplementary Grant 2022/23:

	Primary	Secondary	Special	AP
Teachers' Pension Employer Contribution Grant	£133	£196	£485	£485
Teacher Pay Grant	£45	£69	£175	£175
Total TPECG and TPG	£178	£265	£660	£660
Supplementary Grant 2022/23				
Basic per-pupil rate	£97	£155		
FSM 6	£85	£124		
Total	£182	£279	£670	£670

- 8.8 A rate of £670 per pupil is proposed to be paid to Special and AP schools in 2022/23. This will be paid in 2 parts a one-off payment to cover the period April to August 2022 and an increase to the band values to be paid from September 2022. This enables the current band values for 2021/22 to remain unchanged.
- 8.9 This increase in funding has a cost implication of £0.377m.
- 8.10 The updated Band Values to be applied from September 2022 are shown in Appendix B.

9. EARLY YEARS BLOCK

- 9.1 The Schools Forum in January approved the following formula for the 2022/23 financial year:

Early Years Funding Formula 2022/23			
The hourly rates to be paid to all providers from April 2022 will be:			
2 Year Olds	£5.44	An increase of 21p hour	
3 and 4 Year Olds	£4.48	An increase of 12p per hour	
DEPRIVATION ANALYSIS FOR 3&4 YO		Annual Rate	Rate Per Hour
Band G - IDACI SCORE < 0.20		£0.00	£0.00
Band F - IDACI SCORE 0.20 - 0.25		£125.00	£0.22
Band E - IDACI SCORE 0.25 - 0.30		£125.00	£0.22
Band D - IDACI SCORE 0.30 - 0.35		£175.00	£0.31
Band C - IDACI SCORE 0.35 - 0.40		£275.00	£0.48
Band B - IDACI SCORE 0.40 - 0.50		£375.00	£0.66
Band A - IDACI SCORE > 0.50		£500.00	£0.88
IDACI Postcode Score can be download from:			
http://imd-by-postcode.opendatacommunities.org/imd/2019			
EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM		£342.00	£0.60
DISABILITY ACCESS FUND		£800.00	

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The School's Forum is recommended to:

- a) Note the contents of the report and offer support and challenge.
- b) Consider the 2021/22 outturn position and discuss options to contain continued increase in HNB expenditure in 2022/23
- c) Consider and approve the proposed distribution of £670 per pupil for Special and AP Schools consistent with that to be paid to Mainstream schools and academies in 2022/23.
- d) Approve the updated band values (Appendix B) to be applied from September 2022.
- e) Consider the DSG Management Plan as part of information to be presented at the meeting.

11. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

ESFA publication: [the national funding formulae for schools and high needs 2022-23](#)

School Forum Report 18-01-22 Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22 and 2022/23

12. CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

David May, Strategic Lead, Corporate Finance. E-Mail: dmay@thurrock.gov.uk

Appendix A

<u>Dedicated Schools Grant</u>		<u>2021/22</u>	<u>2021/22</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
		<u>Revised</u>	<u>Projected</u>	<u>Budget</u>
		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Outturn</u>	
		<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>
SB	Schools Block	140.263	139.594	145.820
CSSB	Central Services Block	1.583	1.553	1.688
HNB	High Needs Block	28.965	30.189	33.389
EYB	Early Years Block	12.120	12.355	10.734
Dedicated Schools Grant Funding Settlement		182.931	183.691	191.631
Less Academy Recoupment		(140.680)	(140.680)	(147.332)
Dedicated Schools Grant Received		(42.251)	(42.251)	(44.299)
(Under) / Overspend		(0.000)	0.760	0.000
SB	Maintained Schools Budgets	3.787	3.787	3.814
SB	Business Rates	0.000	0.000	0.000
SB	School Licences	0.131	0.131	0.000
SB	Growth Fund	1.271	0.601	0.887
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Education	0.379	0.379	0.373
CSSB	Statutory and Regulatory duties - Finance	0.130	0.180	0.140
CSSB	School Place planning	0.029	0.029	0.027
CSSB	Admissions	0.280	0.196	0.280
CSSB	Schools Forum	0.010	0.007	0.010
CSSB	SACRE	0.010	0.017	0.010
CSSB	School Licences	0.000	0.000	0.137
CSSB	Contribution to Combined budgets	0.745	0.745	0.711
HNB	Place Funding	0.078	0.000	0.313
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Academies	2.900	3.226	3.502
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Resource Provisions	3.143	2.975	4.069
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Special Schools	5.457	5.158	5.859
HNB	Top Up Funding - Thurrock Alternative Provision	1.503	1.526	1.581
HNB	Top Up Funding - Other Local Authorities (4-16)	1.150	1.231	1.300
HNB	Top Up Funding - Post 16	2.000	2.909	3.000
HNB	Pupils not in School	0.300	0.600	0.450
HNB	Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	1.400	1.241	1.250
HNB	Non Residential - Non Maintained and Independent	1.879	1.967	2.050
HNB	Commissioned Services	1.129	1.135	1.175
HNB	Additional High Needs Targeted	0.100	0.271	0.100
HNB	Home Hospital Education Services	0.000	0.027	0.000
HNB	Travellers Team	0.045	0.043	0.050
HNB	Home to School Transport	1.600	1.600	1.600
HNB	High Needs Central Team	0.675	0.675	0.675
HNB	Contribution to DSG Deficit	0.000	0.000	0.200
EYB	3&4 Year old	9.978	10.303	9.192
EYB	2 year olds	1.630	1.537	1.106
EYB	Early Years Central Team	0.512	0.515	0.436
Dedicated Schools Grant		42.251	43.011	44.299

Appendix B

Type of Provider	Band Descriptor	Band Value 2021/22	Place Funding	MPPG	Top Up Funding	Band Value 2022/23
Special Schools & Academies	Special Band 1	£12,720	£10,000	£660	£2,818	£13,478
	Special Band 2	£14,265	£10,000	£660	£4,428	£15,088
	Special Band 3	£15,000	£10,000	£660	£5,194	£15,854
	Special Band 4	£33,320	£10,000	£660	£24,293	£34,953
	Special Band 5	£35,000	£10,000	£660	£26,044	£36,704
AP	AP Band 1	£28,170	£10,000	£660	£18,924	£29,584
Mainstream Schools & Academies with Specialist / Resource Provisions	Mainstream - Primary Band 1	£14,558	£6,000	£4,265	£4,564	£14,829
	Mainstream - Primary Band 2	£18,935	£6,000	£4,265	£9,127	£19,392
	Mainstream - Primary Band 3	£25,888	£6,000	£4,265	£16,375	£26,640
	Mainstream - Primary Band 4	£27,948	£6,000	£4,265	£18,523	£28,788
	Mainstream - Primary Band 5	£29,493	£6,000	£4,265	£20,133	£30,398
	Mainstream - Primary Band 6	£31,038	£6,000	£4,265	£21,744	£32,009
	Mainstream - Primary Band 7	£37,218	£6,000	£4,265	£28,187	£38,452
	Mainstream - Primary Band 8	£41,338	£6,000	£4,265	£32,482	£42,747
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 1	£14,505	£6,000	£5,525	£3,221	£14,746
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 2	£18,935	£6,000	£5,525	£7,840	£19,365
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 3	£25,835	£6,000	£5,525	£15,033	£26,558
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 4	£27,895	£6,000	£5,525	£17,180	£28,705
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 5	£29,440	£6,000	£5,525	£18,791	£30,316
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 6	£30,985	£6,000	£5,525	£20,402	£31,927
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 7	£37,165	£6,000	£5,525	£26,844	£38,369
	Mainstream - Secondary Band 8	£41,285	£6,000	£5,525	£31,139	£42,664
		Mainstream - Nursery	£32,960	£0	£0	£34,360
Education Health and Care Plans Hourly Rate		£10				£10

THURROCK SCHOOLS FORUM REPORT

DATE:	17 March 2022
SUBJECT:	Pupil Place Planning Update 2022
REPORT OF:	Sarah Williams
THE REPORT IS:	For Information

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's Pupil Place Planning document is reviewed and updated annually. The 2022 to 2026 version is currently being reviewed and updated. The revised version will be sent to all schools and other stakeholders for comment. The final version will be published once all comments received have been considered and any amendments made.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The School's Forum is asked to note the process against the Pupil Place Plan (PPP) 2021-2025.

3. 2022 – 2026 Pupil Place Plan

The Council has a statutory obligation to ensure there is a sufficient supply of school places for all residents who request a place for their child. As population demographics are dynamic, it is necessary to continually review and update pupil place forecasts. Pupil place requirements are reviewed as part of our PPP team meetings that take place every 4 weeks. The group is made up of officers from the PPP team, Finance, Admissions, Awards & Benefits, Transport, Early Years and School Improvement. This group reviews current positions, issues and forecasts. This allows Thurrock to take the necessary action at the earliest opportunity to increase school places when demand is required. Pupil Growth and School Capital Programme updates are provided to Schools' Forum members and at Headteacher briefings.

The PPP gives information about the supply of school places in Thurrock and forecasts pupil numbers for the next five years, with information on the changing context within which planning takes place.

The 2015/16 birth data is still the highest Thurrock has had at 2,505 with the two years either side of that just fractionally below the 2,500 and the current Year 1 is the highest cohort we have had at 2,565. However after reaching a peak of 2,505 births in 2015/16, we are now seeing a decline. The 2020/21 birth rate has reduced by 7% from last year and by 16% since 2015/16 which was the peak.

We are currently processing applications for Reception 2022 of which we received a total of 2376 on time applications. The Published Admission Number for all primary school's totals 2592. However, we do know we will receive late applications.

The primary phase forecasts in the 5 year plan are calculated on the basis of known data regarding live births in Thurrock, the number of children already on roll in schools and the anticipated child yield from proposed housing developments in the planning system.

The heat map provided within the presentation clearly identifies the hot spot areas for births as Grays followed by Aveley, Ockendon and Purfleet and Tilbury.

From Autumn 2016 to Autumn 2021 there has been a 9% (1383 pupils) rise in Primary pupils. From September 2020 to September 2021 there is a 0.5% increase in Primary numbers on roll based on the autumn census. In Secondary From 2016 to Autumn 2021 there has been a rise of 26% (2222 pupils). From September 2020 to September 2021 there is an increase of 2.7% based on the autumn census.

In relation to geographical and statistical neighbours, Thurrock has seen a pupil increase of 21% between 2013-2021.

On National Offer Day, 1st March a total of 2485 secondary applications were considered for a place from Thurrock applicants. There are currently 132 vacancies across the borough, which will support late applications received throughout the academic year and beyond. The local authority has not supported any secondary schools increasing their PAN for year 7.

Pupil yield from developments awaiting planning decision or those that have not yet started equates to approximately 1888 primary pupils and 1012 secondary pupils forecasted to require a school place.

FINANCIAL / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

School places are funded through allocations of the Dedicated Schools Grant, which is linked to the number of pupils within school, although it is lagged by one year.

The Capital costs of providing the infrastructure to provide more School places is funded through Basic Need Capital Grants. These costs would be identified as part of the Schools Capital Programme.

4. REFERENCES TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS / PREVIOUS REPORTS

2021 – 2025 Pupil Place Plan.
Pupil Place Planning Presentation – March 2021

CONTACT DETAILS OF LEAD OFFICER / AUTHOR

If you have any queries or comments in advance of the Schools Forum meeting about this report, please contact

NAME: Sarah Williams
ROLE: Strategic Lead, Educational Support Service
EMAIL: sjwilliams@thurrock.gov.uk
PHONE: 01375 652971

Thurrock School Forum Forward Plan for 2021 – 2022

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item / Focus
23rd June 2022	Dedicated Schools Grant 2021/22 - Outturn
	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2021/22
	ESFA Consultations - Standing
	SEND Success Stories
	Union Facility Time Annual Review - Standing
	Review of Forward Plan 2022/23
	Meeting dates for academic year 2022-23
	Free Schools Update - Standing

Schools Forum

**Draft Minutes of Meeting held 18th January 2022 at 10.00a.m
Microsoft Teams**

In Attendance:

Multi Academy Trusts

Catalyst Academies Trust
Harris Federation
Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust
South West Essex Community Education Trust
The Gateway Learning Community Trust (GLC)
CEO REAch2 Academy Trust
Vines Schools Trust
Christus Catholic Trust

Name

Mr T Parfett (Chair)
Mrs N Graham
Mrs J Clarke
Mr S Munday
Mr K Sadler
Mr E Samuel
Mr S Santhaguru
Mrs J Seymour

Secondary Voluntary Aided School

Grays Convent

Name

Mrs P Johnson

Standalone Academy Trusts

Woodside Academy
Giffards Primary

Name

Mr E Caines
Mrs N Haslam-Davis

Infrastructure Groups

TASS
TPHA

Name

Mr S Bell
Mrs J Sawtell-Haines

Alternative Provision

Olive AP

Name

Ms J Gillman

Special Schools

Treetops Academy
Beacon Hill Academy

Name

Mr J Brewer
Mrs Sue Hewitt

Non-school members

Diocese of Brentwood
0-11 Representative
11-19 Representative
0-5 EYFS Representative

Name

Mrs M Shepherd
Ms Alison Jones
Dr J Revill
Mr A Melbourne

Also in Attendance

Mrs Michelle Lucas
Mr Malcolm Taylor
Mr David May
Andrea Winstone

Assistant Director, Education Skills
Strategic Lead – Specialist Provision/PEP
Strategic Lead – DSG and Schools
Strategic Lead for School Effectiveness and
SEND Children’s Services
Service Manager, Education Support
Service
Clerk

Miss Sarah Williams

Miss Teresa Lydon

1. Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies received from Mrs E Wigmore and Mrs J Seymour. Mr P Griffiths sent his apologies and advised that Mrs J Clark would attend in his absence. Mr M Vickers sent his apologies and advised that Ms J Gilman would attend in his absence.

3. Agreement of Agenda, Time-Guide and Notification of Any Other Business

- a) The Forum agreed the agenda and time guide.
- b) Any Other Business – no other items were put forward before the meeting

4. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) 2021/22 and 2022/23

Mr D May shared his presentation and went through the slides. He advised that the DSG 2021/22 current forecast is a deficit of £0.412m therefore the DSG reserve outturn position would increase to a deficit of £2.295m.

He advised that the High Needs Block (HNB) remains the area of significant financial risk for the following reasons:

- the continued increase in the number of EHCP;
- Post-16 position reflects 32 new places from September, 13 of which are placed in Independent Schools at a cost of £1m.
- Residential and Non-Residential Non-Maintained and Independent placements continuing to increase but can be contained within the funding allocation.
- Increase in supplying tuition packages for pupils not in School, costing £0.450m, an overspend of £0.150m.

There is also a risk in Early Years but the impact will not be known until finalisation of Jan 2022 census. The 2021/22 funding was based on termly census whilst Thurrock local formula was developed using pre-Covid annual data. The projections show an overspend of £0.285m but this reflects 39 weeks paid to providers. The SEN support is currently projecting an £0.180m overspend.

Schools Block (SB)

The key changes made by the ESFA to the National Funding Formula (NFF) in 2022/23 are:

- the core factors in the NFF will increase by 3%.
- the funding floor will ensure that every school is allocated at least 2% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared to 2021-22 allocation.
- The minimum per pupil funding levels will increase by 2%. This will mean that, next year, every primary school will receive at least £4,265 per pupil and every secondary school at least £5,525.

Other key changes are:

- Low prior attainment proportions, data from the 2019 tests is used as a proxy for the 2020 tests, cancelled due to Covid-19;

- Free School meals ever 6(FSM6) eligibility is now calculated from the October 2021 census in line with the pupil premium;
- From 2022/23 national non-domestic rates (NNDR) will be paid by ESFA directly to billing authorities.

Mr D May spoke about the transfer of monies from Schools to High Needs Block. He advised that at the last meeting held on the 18th November 2021 it was agreed to a transfer of up to 0.5% (up to £0.730m), the maximum amount allowed, from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support increase demand for Specialist placements and Education, Health and Care Plans. The transfer also reflects, that during the 2020/21 academic year, 76 children who were included in the Schools Block autumn 2020 census moved to be funded from the High Needs Block without any transfer of funds. He advised that the Growth Fund received by Thurrock is £1.399m, a decrease of £0.359m from that received in 2021/22.

Mr D May went through the Thurrock Schools Funding formula 2022/23. He advised that:

- National Funding Formula (NFF) values have been applied.
- Unallocated funding has allowed an inflationary increase of 1.034 to be applied to Basic Entitlement values (ACA = 1.03799).
- To support existing commitments and an additional 270 primary places from September 2021, a retained growth fund of £0.887m in 2022/23 is proposed
- HNB contribution of £0.700m (0.48%).
- Notional SEN percentages are consistent with 2021/22

Mr D May advised that the Funding Formula needed to be return to the ESFA by 21st January 2022. ESFA approval is needed to confirm funding allocations.

Mr D May spoke about the Schools Supplementary grant 2022/23. He advised that the 2021 spending review confirmed £1.6 billion additional funding for schools and high needs for the 2022/23 financial year to provide support known as the supplementary grant. This will only be payable to public sector employers. This means that further education colleges, sixth form colleges, independent learning providers, as well as private and voluntary sector early years providers will not be eligible to receive this funding. It will fund maintained nursery schools, maintained schools, academies and free schools, 16 to 19 maintained schools, academies and city technology. He advised that Local authorities and academies will receive their payments from spring 2022. In 2022/23 this additional funding will be a separate grant, but will be incorporated into core budget for 2023/24 where possible.

Mr E Caines asked about the pupil premium rates shown in Mr D May's presentation and asked why primary was higher than secondary, was this a mis-print. Mr E Caines advised that they do not have the same access to SEN needs funding and have many SEN pupils attending their school with high needs. Mr D May advised that the pupil premium funding for primary is £1,345 and £955 for secondary per pupil.

Mrs S Hewitt asked how the supplement fund is being paid to special needs schools. Mr D May advised this will be discussed under the High Needs Block.

AGREED

- a) All members noted the improved position and offered support and challenge
- b) All members agreed the financial position for 2021/22
- c) All members agreed to receive regular updates on the 2021/22 projected outturn position.
- d) All members agreed to make decisions at the meeting based on the information presented.

- e) All members confirmed their agreement to the transfer of 0.5% £0.700m from the Schools Block to High Need Block to support increase demand for Specialist placements and EHCP's in 2022/23.
- f) 15 members confirmed their agreement to the retention of £0.887m to fund in year growth in 2022/23.

Central Block

Mr D May advised that this was created from the DSG funding that was held centrally by the local authority. This has a projected under spend of £0.25m due to a combination of salary slippage and savings in venue hire for School Forum meetings.

AGREED

- a) All members agreed the use of the Central Block budget of £1,688m in 2022/23

High Needs Block (HNB)

Mr D May advised that Thurrock has received an increase of £4.598m, which includes £1.234m of additional funding. The key areas are:

- Projected Outturn 2021/22 is a deficit of £0.890m.
- Continued Year on Year Increase in EHCP's +10% against a population growth of +2%
- A significant increase in Commissioned Numbers.
- A significant increase in Band Values from Sept-22.
- Need to consider National Insurance / Health and Social Care Levy Supplementary Grant Apr-22 to Aug-22
- DSG Management Plan 2021/22 – Discussed Nov-21 and to be updated for Mar-22 meeting
- School Forum Mar-22 - Need to review the Schools Exclusion policy, to update the 2022/23 funding values, consider the date the recoupment starts from and funding of the travel implications.

Mr D May went through the current and projected number of EHCP's by placement and primary need up to Jan 2025. He advised that the long term strategy is to increase the local offer and reduce the number of out of area placements. Also deliver improved outcomes for young people and improved value for money.

He advised that in 2021/22 the local authority commissioned 623 pupils in special schools or specialist settings. In 2022/23 the local authority is to increase commissioned numbers with the EFSA to 732 places which reflects the opening and planned expansion of Treetops Free School. This also reflected an additional 74 places reflecting the further development of Primary Autism and Secondary SEMH provision which will bring the total to 806.

Mr D May advised from the funding available, for the first time, the high needs block is able to set a realistic budget.

Mr D May updated the DSG Management Plan summary to included expected growth in funding of 5% in 2023/24 and 3% 2024/25. This was a significant improvement to the information presented in November.

Mrs J Gilmore asked about supplementary rates Grant Apr 22 to Aug 22. Mr D May advised that a 4.25% uplift has been applied to top up funding from Sept 22 and the presentation outlined an option from April to August.

Mr E Caines commented on the deficit and felt it was eye watering. 2% growth in pupil numbers but 10% growth in EHCPs. He advised that we seem to have a huge growth of EHCPs. He commented that the primary schools need more funding. He asked if this is a national problem or are EHCPs in Thurrock very high. Mr D May advised we are consistent with the national issues. He asked if other LAs had the high number of EHCPs that Thurrock has. Mr D May advised that on the finance, government have clarified 3 and 5%. It is a national problem increases in EHCPs and all boroughs are experiencing pressures in the HNB. Mr D May hopes that the outcome of the SEND review will help with the management of the HNB. Mrs A Winstone advised that Thurrock has 4% of children with EHCPs whereas nationally it is at 3%. However we are not the highest in the country. She also commented that she feels that people do move into the borough hoping for a space at Treetops but this does not happen.

Mrs S Hewitt asked if there was a national agreement on how the supplementary grant would be given to special schools. Mr D May advised that there was no separate documentation on this. Mrs S Hewitt asked if he could take this question back and see what others were doing.

Action: Mr D May to review options for the use of the supplementary grant from April 22 to August 22.

Mr A Melbourne asked if there was any research tracking the other Local Authority areas from which the EHCPs we are inheriting are coming from. He would like to see something which could reflect that? Mrs A Winstone advised they have not tracked where the children have come from. She advised that one LA moved one family in with 3 EHCPs into housing in Thurrock.

Action: Mrs A Winstone to look at where children with EHCPs are moving in from and look at any trends.

AGREED

- a) 17 members agreed to the High Needs Block budget of £33.390m in 2022/23
- b) The vote for one-off Payments to provide to contribute to increase cost from the National Insurance/Health and Social Care Levy for the period April 2022 to August 2022 was deferred until the next meeting.

Early Years Block

Mr D May advised that the October budget and spending review released additional funding for the early years entitlements worth £160m in 2022/23, £180m in 2023/24 and £170m in 2024/25. It is for local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to childcare providers for the government's free childcare entitlement offers and reflects the costs of inflation and national living wage increases. Mr D May discussed information which he had received from the ESFA for 2022/23 which reflected and increase in the hourly rate for 2 year olds of 21p per hour and 3&4 year olds of 17p per hour.

In 2020/21 there was a deficit of £0.450m. Reasons for this included:

- Significant Covid Support Provided
- Guaranteed payments to providers based on historic census data £1m
- Additional One off Payment for Covid related costs £0.235m

The projected deficit for 2021/22 is £0.285m. Reasons include:

- Maximum support passported to providers
- 39 weeks in financial year, only 38 weeks received from ESFA.
- Increased demand for SEN Support

Mr May advised that Thurrock will need to consider this information, the ongoing impact of Covid on Census numbers in 2022 and the Early Years Financial position for the 3 year period 2020/23, to understand options available.

He advised there is a reduction in funding for Early Years Block, based on ESFA assumptions. Thurrock have used 2021 termly census information. Funding in 2022/23 will be based on Jan 22 and Jan 23 census which have not taken place yet. He is concerned about the increase in Early Years numbers throughout the year. Mr D May broke this down in the presentation

He also spoke about deprivation funding. He advised this is very low. They currently use about 1% to 1.5% of the money for this. The SEN support means that £180,000 will need to be picked up by the High Needs Block. Proposal for 3&4 year old funding is £11m with a 12p per hour increase. Also planning to increase the deprivation rate from £163,793.20 to £224,695.50 the equivalent of 3p per hour.

He advised that we receive £4.60 per hour as a local authority which is less than other local authorities in East of England. We will get a 17p uplift.

Mr A Melbourne asked why Essex get 1p more than Thurrock. Mr D May advised it is based on historic funding. Overtime the government are going to make all LAs equal. Mr E Caines asked if we were not getting the full entitlement. Mr D May advised that every LA up to 2015/16 were funded on full take-up. Our rate is different because of take-up historically. He advised we are now funded on a termly count. Mr A Melbourne commented that it is good news it is better than previously advised. Mr A Melbourne asked if there was anything he could do with 3&4 year olds funding. Should we have a longer term strategy in paying off the deficit. Mr May advised he has passported as much as he can to early years. He had not factored in accumulative deficit. He advised they need to agree a funding rate and have it in place by March. This is why he has reduced the SEN funding and the Early Years central team to be able to provide more funding.

Mr A Melbourne commented that at the Early Years forum which Mr D May attends as well the attendees will struggle with this information.

Mr D May advised this budget allows them to reset the Early Years block and distribute as much as they can to providers and in 2022/23 and they may have a small surplus so they can passport more money.

AGREED

- a) All Forum members noted contents of the report and offered support and challenge
- b) All Forum members considered the 2022/23 information provided on both the schools and High Needs Block financial position.
- c) 16 Forum members agreed to the increase in hourly rates in 2022/23 of £5.44 for 2 year olds and £4.48 for 3 and 4 year olds.
- d) 16 Forum members agreed an increase in deprivation rates in 2022/23, equal to a 3p per hour increase.
- e) 15 Forum members agreed the Early Years Central Team budget of £0.436m, a reduction of £0.082m from 2021/22.

Mr D May advised a shortened version of the presentation would be delivered at the Head teachers briefing and asked if it would be helpful to deliver this presentation to school finance staff. The Chair and other members felt this would be very helpful.

5. Growth Fund 2022/23

Miss S Williams discussed the Growth Fund for 2022/23. Miss S Williams advised that the local authority continues to work with schools and academies to ensure that there is a sufficiency of school places to meet local demand across the borough. In certain circumstances this may involve increasing the published admission number (PANS) in those schools and academies where existing places are deemed insufficient to meet projected local demand. Currently the local authority, through basic need funding, supports the capital cost of any required expansion and bulge classes, if that expansion or bulge class has been agreed as part of the pupil place planning process.

She advised that the growth fund may not be used to support schools and academies in financial difficulty.

Growth funding in Thurrock will be applied in the following circumstances:

- where a school or academy has agreed with the authority to provide additional places (30 places) to meet basic need in the area (either as a bulge class or on-going commitment).
- support where a schools and academy has increased its PAN in agreement with the Local Authority to meet basic need in the area.
- Funding will be for a full class of 30 children, funded for one year only. For example from September to the following August. There will then be an annual review of the numbers in the bulge class using the summer census. Funding in the second year will be based on the difference in actual numbers of children on roll between the summer and October census. No funding will be provided in year 3.

Growth funding will not apply in the following circumstances:

- For any PAN increases which are not agreed with the local authority as part of the place planning process to meet basic need in the area.
- Where pupils are admitted above a schools and academies PAN as a consequence of appeal, infant class size regulation exceptions or error in the school admissions process.
- The fund will not be applied retrospectively and will only apply to increases in class size agreed with the council.
- Funding will not be provided following the October census whereby the class is not full to capacity.

AGREED

- a) All Forum members agreed the proposed criteria for schools and academies accessing funding allocated for growth for the academic year 2022/23
- b) All Forum members agreed a Growth Fund budget for the financial year 2022/23 of £887,139.
- c) All Forum members agreed to keep under review the need to establish a Falling Rolls Policy.

Falling Rolls Fund

Miss S Williams advised that guidance issued allows local authorities to top-slice from the schools block to create a small fund to support good or outstanding schools and academies with falling rolls where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years.

She advised that the key principles that drive the need to maintain a falling rolls fund are to ensure that places are secured where those places will be required in the following two to three years and that neither the LA or schools/academies incur unnecessary costs in relation to short-term temporary losses in pupil numbers. In consideration of the data available it is not considered that this would be appropriate as the conditions outlined above would not be required within Thurrock in 2022/23.

Ms Jo Sawtell asked if schools have to apply for falling rolls funding. Miss S Williams advised they monitor pupil places on a monthly basis and will advise further if this growth was needed. They look at the Pupil Place Planning document annually to review the forecasted data for each school in each planning area. Ms Jo Sawtell advised she is concerned about future falling rolls in her area and has a separate meeting with Miss S Williams.

Mrs N Haslam-Davis asked if they have a date in mind when schools may be approached for bulge classes for Reception 2022. Mrs S Williams advised that they may be able to look at this in late February/March but they also need to bear in mind historically they receive lots of late applications which will not be looked at until after national offer day on the 16th April 2022.

Mr A Melbourne asked if the growth fund is LA money or comes from central fund? Mr D May advised it is central. Mr A Melbourne asked if there is any parallel fund for early years. Mr D May advised that early years is funded based on take up on a termly basis along with the annual January census. Mr A Melbourne advised there is a need to support growth in early years and we need to look at a solution for this. Mr D May advised that early years is funded on how many children are in the settings so their funding is immediate. Mr A Melbourne commented that we need to develop some solution for early years funding. Mrs J Clark asked if in a planning area there are a few schools who would consider additional growth how does the LA decide which school open bulge classes or expansion. Miss S Williams advised that this would be looked at following the principles which have been previously agreed at schools forum

Action: Miss S Williams to send out to all members a copy of the principals for expansion.

6. Outcomes of Disadvantaged Children

Mr J Revill provided a verbal update and shared a spreadsheet.

He advised that there are 30,352 learners on roll (15,519 Female and 14,833 Male) with 18.54% in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) (5,626), 14.5% of learners have some form of SEND Type (4,408) of which MLD is the most prevalent, 24.12% closely followed by Speech and Language Disorder at 22.78% of which 1,294 have an Education Health and Care Plan. Over 55% of the learner population is "White – British", and an additional 11% "Other White" and just over 11% "Black – African". There are then another 17 Ethnicity groups of which "Gypsy/Roma" represent 0.24% (73), the smallest group.

Scanning the Year Groups under the same analysis shows no significant deviations from the "norm" stated above.

Overall, approximately 25% of learners progress into Year 12 (Within the school sixth forms), what is interesting is that this is zero for Gypsy/Roma (but not unexpected). However, learners with a defined SEND Type are far less likely to remain in school at year 11, it reduces to approximately 11%. The same pattern can be seen for the SEND Provision type. The number of learners classified as PLAA progressing into school year 12 is also very small.

It is noted that of the 73 learners classified as Gypsy/Roma 30% of have some form of SEND need, over 12% higher than the next group. The next largest group of learners classified as SEND is "White British" at 18%.

He advised that he has not looked at school exclusions as assumed there is a requirement to report on this centrally.

Mr E Caines asked about gender. He advised that he feels that white dis-advantaged boys would be very high. They need to look at some scores to see which areas they are not achieving and what we need to do.

Mrs A Winstone advised they can provide all data on where the children with EHCPs move onto after Year 11.

Next Steps

1. Track changes over a period (11 Years)
2. More importantly link to outcomes (Quals, employment Fiscal impact)
3. Understand how we can gather information on important protected characteristics, unless I have missed it this is not represented in the census data.

Action: Mrs A Winstone to share with Miss S Williams where children with EHCPs move to after Year 11

Mrs J Sawtell-Haines asked what the remit of the sub group was. Mr J Revel advised it is to look at the trends for learners of dis-advantaged groups in Thurrock and what we can do going forward. Mrs J Sawtell-Haines asked about deprivation funding. Mr D May advised that they could only look at pooling money agreed by this group to this area. Mrs J Sawtell-Haines advised that the Gypsy/Romany children is no surprise as their attendance is not very good. Mr J Revill advised we need to look at encouraging and engaging these children

Mr A Melbourne asked if they had any figures for early years. Mr J Revill advised this will only look at children in setting and census. Mrs M Shepherd asked if we could access public funding. Mr J Revill advised that they are looking into this.

Mr J Revill advised they now need to look at track and change over a 11 year period.

AGREED

- a) All Forum members noted contents of the presentation

7. School's Forum Forward Plan

Miss S Williams asked if there were any agenda items that could be moved as it was a heavy agenda for 17th March 2022.

Mrs M Lucas suggested that the SEND success stories and Education offer for SEND pupils could move to the June agenda.

Action: Miss S Williams to move agreed agenda items to June and further review the forward plan with Mrs M Lucas and the schools forum chair.

AGREED

- a) All Forum members notes the content of the report and offered support and challenge.

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 18th November 2021

The Chair went through the Minutes of the previous meeting for accuracy.

The Chair commented that on Page 4 the following paragraph needed to be re-worded.

“Children who have gone through the SEN system and have an EHCP in the longer term would be moved to the Quarry hill or Dilkes Academy provision or may be able to attend another mainstream school if possible”. Mrs M Lucas asked for this to be discussed with Mr M Taylor outside this meeting.

Action: Mr M Taylor to discuss changes to wording in previous minutes with Mr T Parfett

All governors were happy with the rest of the content.

9. Matters Arising

Action 1 – Mrs A Winstone advised the sunshine centre is not part of the sufficiency report

Action 2 – Mr J Revill discussed datasets at this meeting.

Action 3 – Miss S Williams has added the necessary items to the forward plan.

10. Any Other Business

Miss S Williams inquired about the next meeting and if it would be Hybrid. The Chair advised that he is happy to stick to virtual for now. All members agreed.

11. Date of next meeting

Thursday 17th March 2022 – Virtual Meeting