

WIRRAL SCHOOLS' FORUM

7th November 2018

MINUTES

Present: Adrian Whiteley (Chair)

Schools Group

L Ayling	H Johnson
M Bellamy	T Kelly
R Bridges	N Lightwing
D Burrows (deputy)	R Mahoney
J Bush	E Neal
B Cassidy	D Spencer
L Comber (deputy)	T Taylor
L Davidson	A Waller
M Forber	R Wood
L Ireland	

Non-Schools Group

S Bennett	C Fenna (deputy)
A Donelan	A Ryecroft (deputy)

In Attendance:

S Allen	A Davies
S Ashley	S Talbot
J Wood	

Apologies:

K Brown	M Morris
S Davies	N Prance
I Harris	S Ralph
	C Ravenscroft

1. Minutes from the Meeting held on 26th September 2018

The minutes from the meeting were accepted as a true record.

2. Matters Arising

Free School Meal Eligibility

Shaun Allen updated Forum of the developments within the Free School Meals Eligibility since the last Forum. The introduction of Universal Credit and the end of the opt-out process due to GDPR has increased the risk of eligible children not being identified and therefore funding may be reduced. The de-delegation amount is not sufficient to cover the cost of the Benefits team's work and

increased checks for the Benefits team resulting from a handful of schools independently purchasing Capita's on-line checker system (OFSM). Capita's OFSM is an alternative system that would be maintained by schools. Wirral could purchase it on behalf of maintained schools, at a discounted rate, through increased de-delegation. Running 2 systems simultaneously is not a viable option, so the report seeks forums views and recommends purchasing the online system, funded by de-delegation of the licence cost for Primary and Secondary maintained schools, and an in year charge of the licence cost for maintained Special Schools.

The schools that have already purchased the system independently have identified additional FSM pupils which has more than covered the cost of the licence.

If the LA purchase Capita OFSM Academies will be able to buy it at the discounted rate as long as they purchase within 3 months of the start of the contract, but there would no longer be access to the Benefits Team.

Resolved

- Forum unanimously agreed to approve the purchase of the Capita's Online FSM System from April 2019 to be funded through an increase of de-delegation for each maintained school and reflecting the licence cost for their particular school.
- Forum agreed for the OFSM system to be introduced at the earliest opportunity
- Forum rejected the recommendation for the de-delegation for 2019-20 to enable the Benefits Team to provide transitional support.

3. High Needs Update

John Wood verbally updated Forum on the independent SEND Review, the Pilot Schemes, budget pressures, and the upcoming consultation regarding a 0.5% top-slice from the schools block to support High Needs. The document included in Appendix 1 was provided at the meeting. Members requested clarity on the use of the 0.5% top slice in 2017-18 before any decisions could be made on a further top slice for 2018-19. John Wood and/or those carrying out the SEN review will be attending Headteacher groups, and cluster groups.

Resolved

Forum noted the report

4. Outcome of Schools Funding Formula Consultation

The Chair of the Schools' Forum thanked the Local Authority for work on the consultation, which was very clear and provided sufficient information to make informed responses. The consultation being electronic for the first time also made it easier for schools to respond.

Shaun Allen provided feedback on the results of the Funding Formula Consultation which will affect from 2019-20 and thanked members and schools for the high level of engagement. 86 schools responded to the consultation, and as 34 (40%) of respondents favoured Model 4 (current formula with NFF Low Prior Attainment) this has been recommended by the LA. 31% preferred model 2, a direct move to NFF values, but more schools preferred a transitional arrangement.

As 65% of responders favoured a 0% MFG this has been recommended by the LA.

The extra funding of approximately £1.4 m (headroom) will be used in full to support the implementation of Model 4 and other values will need to be reduced. In the other models any spare headroom can be shared amongst other elements.

Resolved

- Forum noted the report
- Forum agreed Model 4 to be implemented for the 2019-20 funding formula. (10 for, 7 against, 3 abstentions)
- Forum rejected 0% MFG for the 2019-20 funding formula, which means a -1.5% MFG will be applied. (7 for, 8 against, 5 abstentions).
- Forum agreed that as Model 4 was agreed the factor values are reduced across all factors. (16 for, 3 abstentions)

It was noted that the chair considered it morally wrong for Forum to contradict a well responded consultation.

5. Update of PFI Budgets

Shaun Allen updated Forum on the PFI matters including

- the use of two PFI City Learning Centres at Hilbre and former Kingsway Academy sites
- value for money testing and Benchmarking against the market price of equivalent Facilities management services.
- Discussions on alternative options for the use of the PFI building of the former Kingsway Academy.

Resolved

The report was noted

6. Workplan

The workplan was provided for information.

The dates of the meetings for the 2018-19 academic year are:-

Wednesday 16th January 2019

Wednesday 15th May 2019

Wednesday 26th June 2019

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business

Appendix 1

SCHOOLS FORUM – UPDATE ON SEND MATTERS – 7TH NOVEMBER 2018 SEND SERVICE

Restructure commenced early 2018 – WBC additional funding of £587k

- Statutory assessment team – now permanent - 9 coordinators plus 2 trainees
- Coordinators aligned to phases – primary/secondary/post 16/LAC-OOB-Independents
- New manager – legal, training, policies and processes
- KIND – clinical psychologists
 - Early intervention, non-SEN, EY/KS1
 - Working with schools, children and families
- Data migration to Capita – integration with other systems, improved responsiveness
- Teams concentrated on Hamilton Building except Home Education

SEND REVIEW

- a. Builds on the internal review completed in late 2017 and will where appropriate, develop some of its recommendations.
- b. Who will carry out the review:

The review will be carried out by the Premier Advisory Group PAG www.premieradvisory.co.uk whose team will be led by their Director, Keith Warburton.

- c. Purpose - to support the Council in the:
 - development of the future model for SEND provision and services in the Wirral
 - generation of the high needs budget for 2020-21 and....
 - development of a three-year plan for the management of the High Needs budget;
- d. Duration – the review will run until late Autumn 2019.
- e. Phasing (indicative)
 - Phase 1 – to January 2019
 - Provision mapping exercise
 - Consultation with schools, services, parents
 - Identification of options
 - Input into 2019-20 budget setting where practicable
 - Phase 2 – February to May 2019
 - Options appraisal
 - Modelling of need

- Testing with users, partners
- Phase 3 – June to October
 - Generation of business cases
 - Three-year model
 - Detailed costings
- f. Factors being considered in delivering the programme:
 - The lack of integrated SEND datasets which would delay the work of the consultants – it was agreed that as an independent organisation, PAG needed to support the direction of change rather than validate the data.
 - The need to integrate the work of the Review with a series of internal council projects which have been identified and are being commissioned.
- g. Communications
 - a. Whilst there will be formal phases of consultation it is intended that consultation and feedback should continue through the life of the review;
 - b. We want to take all opportunities to maintain the dialogue and to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute:
 - i. Regular feedback via existing fora eg. WiSpHA, primary, secondary heads associations, PCPW, locality meetings, Schools Forum, SEND Strategy Group etc
 - ii. Schools, practitioners, officers will be encouraged to provide/gather feedback during the course of their normal 'business' eg team meetings, stakeholder groups etc
 - iii. Links between related council projects and the SEND Review will be identified;
 - iv. Increased use of Local Offer website and social media, possibly including a regular newsletter.
- h. Next Steps
 - i. Communication due this week
 - ii. Issuing of brief for Phase 1
 - iii. Premier Advisory and/or myself will be contacting partners to set up meetings
 - iv. Internal – commissioning of related projects

Trials 2018-19

- One half term or a term and a half is insufficient time to evaluate
- Monitoring has commenced – have been in contact with schools and feedback has just been received - see Annex A.
- Key points:
 - Children have mix of needs
 - Needs would need to be met somewhere

- Trials need to run for at least 2 terms and even if they were deemed unsuccessful a natural breakpoint would be needed with sufficient notice to manage cessation

High Needs Funding – Matters for Consideration

2018-19 Budget

- Last outturn = £0.5m Sep
- Likely outturn – much higher
- Revised projections are being generated and will include an attempt at projecting the cash flow for the next few years

Pressures eg

- Placements over capacity – will increase base funding in 2019-20 budget
- Needs becoming more complex eg Oldershaw – Year 7: 4 mild to 11 complex needs
- Increased numbers of primary children with challenging behaviour/mental health issues at risk of exclusion - requiring SEMH places, assessment or permanent

2019-20 Budget Setting and Three-Year Plan

- The 19-20 budget will be a **holding position** pending the creation of a 3 year plan commencing 2020-21
- Will require budgetary support until longer term plan for recovering financial position is in place
- Opportunities for savings, reductions will be very limited

National Funding Formula

- Formula places more emphasis on Low Prior Attainment and therefore SEN Support.

DSG Consultation on Top slice

- Similar model but different questions
- The decision needs to be set into the wider strategic context and will need to take into account the above factors
- Proposed timing:
 - Consultation 26th Nov – 14th Dec
 - Analysis – by High Needs Working group – early January
 - School Forum report – 16th January

John Wood

7th November 2018

ANNEX INITIAL FEEDBACK ON TRIALS – 5-11-18

Woodslee - specialist base for KS1/ lower KS2 for children with Social, Emotional, Mental Health. The base will be established using the 'Nurture' principles and provide a high level of support for those children who are currently finding it difficult to access mainstream provision. The aim is to re-integrate these pupils into mainstream provision.

- Number pupils w/e 19th Oct = 4 (This includes 1 very traumatised child who is currently attending outside the school hours).
- Expected number by Dec 2018 (if known) = 5
- Initial Feedback:
 - Do the children referred match the original planned profile?
'All of the children have experienced trauma and as a result have complex and severe Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. Yes they match the original profiles.'
 - Are children making expected progress
'Prior to attending the Base, some of these children had not been attending school and 1 child was assessed as being unable to access home tuition. All children were isolated within a school setting and displaying violent behaviour which meant that other adults and children were not deemed to be safe. The academic progress that the children were making prior to entry ranged from none to limited. Within mainstream settings, the children's Social and Emotional needs were so complex that they could not be addressed.'
 - Since being in the Base, all of the children have received a full clinical assessment and have detailed treatment plans in place. The Behaviour Incident Reports detail a dramatic decrease in violent outbursts. We have been able to assess where they are in the curriculum, this in itself was an achievement due to the anxiety that is triggered by the fear of academic failure. The children are following interventions based on a Neuro Sequential Therapeutic programme and are beginning to access a personalised curriculum.
 - They are accessing daily:
 - Reading
 - Phonics and basic writing skills
 - Maths
 - Science
 - Computing
 - Music related to rhythm work
 - Art
 - Whilst it is too early to measure academic progress, there has been a notable improvement in their compliance to persevere with a task and a reduction in anxiety associated with learning.
 - Do you think that the expected outcomes can be delivered?

'Given the progress already made, we feel confident that we can meet the desired outcomes (i.e. to prepare the children to return to mainstream school and to regulate their own emotions and behaviour. However, in order to achieve this the parents have received training and regular support to work in a consistent way with the Base as it is vital that home and school work together on the same strategies that have been highlighted from the clinical assessment. If parents do not have the capacity or motivation to remain committed to the programme this will limit the progress that the child is able to make.'
 - Do you think the trial should continue?
'The setting up of the Base has been challenging and on one occasion it impacted on the rest

of the school. However, the close support that we have received from the KIND team has enabled us to develop a partnership. This partnership enables us to work together to continually make improvements to the provision of the Base. We have not had a negative impact on the rest of the school since the second week of opening. The development of the staff has enabled us to influence strategies used with our mainstream children that has been beneficial for all.'

The Observatory School Y5/Y6 Base - Key Stage 2, year 5- year 6 pupils for 8 pupils, who were out of school. This has been in operation since 1st April 2018.

- Number pupils w/e 19th Oct = 6
- Expected number by Dec 2018 (if known) = 8, full
- Initial feedback:
 - Children have wide range of needs, from challenging SEMH, to significant social communication difficulties, some are under assessment
 - Yr 6 children were accepted by school before the trial
 - Year 6-7 transition is greatly improved, 'seamless'
 - Issues with scaffolding of support and provision of therapeutic services

Oldershaw - provision for 9 year 7 pupils who historically would have attended a Special School. but will need a primary delivery for part of their educational provision.

- Number pupils w/e 19th Oct = 11 (9 with EHCPs)
- Expected number by Dec 2018 (if known) = 10
- Initial feedback:
 - Do the children referred match the original planned profile?
'one child is working at approximately Year 1, whilst other children are working at Year 2/3. With the exception of M.T., it is possible to accommodate the other 10 pupils and differentiate accordingly'
 - Are children making expected progress
'At this early stage, the pupils have begun to make academic progress but primary focus has been on emotional literacy – the pupils are making progress in this area as well.'
 - Do you think that the expected outcomes can be delivered?
'Educational outcomes can be met but Speech and Language outcomes cannot be met with current provision; can't even get S&L triage meeting until January. The high level of S&L resources afforded to special school should be extended to relevant school in pilot programme due to increased number of EHCP pupils and level of need.'
 - Do you think the trial should continue?
'Yes – the pupils have largely settled well at Oldershaw and are continuing to grow in confidence each day; it would be very distressing to unsettle them by transferring them to another school after so much work was completed for transition. The funding review in 12 months' time will reflect the actual costs and resources required to meet need. Students settling in is not the issue that will need to be discussed at the review. The next phase of development will centre on the LA database of SEN children in primary schools to determine future planning.'

Hilbre - Provision for **10** year 7 pupils who historically would have attended a Special School. This group of pupils have been identified as benefitting from mainstream provision but will need a primary delivery for part of their educational provision.

- Number pupils w/e 19th Oct = 9
- Expected number by Dec 2018 (if known) = 9
- Initial Feedback
 - Do the children referred match the original planned profile?
'Yes'
 - Are children making expected progress
'Yes, all bar 1'
 - Do you think that the expected outcomes can be delivered?
'In most cases yes except one pupil.'
- Do you think the trial should continue?
'With the current cohort yes, however we do not have the capacity for this to be our normal intake in a year on year basis.'