

**SCHOOLS FORUM****Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019, 2:00pm – 4:00pm****Douglass House****Attendees:**

Wendy Cording (WC)	Chair
Heidi Price (HP)	PAPH representative
Ian Cording (IC)	PAPH representative
Aaron Meredith (AM)	PAPH representative
Heidi Price (HP)	PAPH representative
Anne Thorne (AT)	SHAP Governor representative
Anita Hemi (AH)	PLT representative
Andrea Hemmens (ASH)	SHAP representative
Julie Bevan (JB)	PLT representative
Ann-Marie Allchurch (AA)	CE Diocese representative
Amanda Paddison (AP)	Education, Participation & Skills – Head of Business & Access
Penny Whitell (PW)	Education, Participation & Skills – SEND Service Manager
Louise Jenkins (LJ)	Education, Participation & Skills – Finance Officer
Lisa Hartley (LH)	CEO PLP
Matthew Corrigan (MCO)	PLT representative
Martyn Cox (MC)	PLT representative
Colin Randall (CR)	PAPH representative
Karen Cook (KC)	RC Diocesan Rep
Nadia Donald (ND)	Clerk to Schools Forum
Amanda White	Clerk to Schools Forum (shadowing)

**Apologies:**

Justine Mason (JM)	PLT representative
Pat Gould (PG)	PAG representative
Ben Manning (BM)	Post 16 representative
Vicky Smith (VS)	Early Years representative
Jo Siney (JS)	Education, Participation & Skills – Head of SEND
Judith Harwood (JAH)	Assistant Director, Education, Participation & Skills
Matthew Bindon	Alternative Provision representative

<b>I.</b>	<b>WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES</b>	<b>Action</b>
	As above.	

2.	<p><b>MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>Vicky Smith is the new EY representative but unable to attend today.</p> <p>Ian Cording will be stepping down following the December meeting and a new Primary representative will be required for the January meeting.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING ON 19 JUNE 2019</b></p> <p>Minutes approved as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>HS will be discussing breakdown of high needs block at this meeting.</p> <p>JS not able to attend today's meeting; PW attending in her place to discuss the use of EHAT alongside EHC.</p> <p>Call for evidence relating to funding for SEND was sent 31/07/2019.</p>	
5.	<p><b>SCHOOLS FUNDING 2020/21</b></p> <p><b>Funding Allocation:</b></p> <p>DfE have released provisional funding allocations for 2020/21 for the designated schools grant schools block, high needs block and central schools services block. Information on the early years block has not yet been received. All allocations are provisional and based on previous pupil numbers.</p> <p><b>Schools Block:</b></p> <p>A 6% increase in per pupil funding. The average nationally is 4.2%; Plymouth will still be receiving the 88<sup>th</sup> lowest per pupil funding rate. Predicted figures for schools are available on the collect system.</p> <p><b>High Needs Block:</b></p> <p>Funding will be increased by 13%. The average nationally is 11.95%. The final amount will differ slightly as some elements of the formula will change before the final allocations are made.</p> <p><b>Central School Services Block:</b></p> <p>A decrease of £0.506m. Funding for ongoing commitments has increased slightly; historic commitment funding has been decreased by £0.526m due to unwinding of historic commitments. This will form part of the consultation. There is no decision on whether this decrease will continue in future years.</p> <p><b>National Funding Formula 2020/21:</b></p> <p>Minimum funding levels for 2020/21 are £3750 for each primary pupil (increasing to £4000 in 2021/22) and £5000 per secondary pupil. Minimum levels for 2019/20 are £3500 per primary pupil and £4800 per secondary pupil.</p> <p>Each local authority will continue to set the local schools formula in consultation with local schools. The government has confirmed its intention to move to a single 'hard' funding formula to determine every schools budget in the future, however there has been a delay on when this will come in as Central Government have not yet consulted</p>	

**Plymouth consultation for 2020/21 funding:**

Policy documents and operational notes, technical guides and an authority proforma tool has been received from central government to enable the start of the modelling and consultation process.

The Plymouth consultation document will be sent out in November 2019, and responses will be fed back to Schools Forum on 11 December. Final provisional allocations will be taken to Schools Forum on 15 January 2020.

The information will then be sent to the ESFA for ratification and confirmation of 2020/21 school budget shares by 29 February 2020.

CR asked about the £60k for early help. LJ confirmed that this was a one off project and as the funds haven't been used this will go back into the DSG pot to be distributed.

WC asked everyone to look out for the consultation coming in and to make colleagues aware.

Early Years block – LJ advised that a separate consultation will be required relating to Early Years – currently awaiting further information.

**6. BUDGET MONITORING 2019/20**

The updated DSG allocation for 2019/20 is £205.531m This has been increased due to the following:

- Additional £0.108m received through High Needs Block due to increase in import/export funding. There was also a small £0.009m adjustment at the beginning of the year relating to a change in deductions compared to the estimate at budget setting
- Additional £0.426m received through Early Years Block due to increased uptake 2019/20
- Additional £0.272m received relating to 2018/19 Early Years Block.

The current forecast DSG overspend is £1.061m (previous reported overspend £0.850m). This is made up of the following:

- Schools Block (£0.143m) underspend – relates to growth funding forecast
- High Needs Block £1.149m overspend – see high needs update for more details
- Early Years Block £0.054m overspend – relates to increase in demand for SEND inclusion funding.

The financial stability of maintained schools is monitored using the budget monitoring returns and is RAG rated to highlight those schools whose financial position is cause for concern. There are currently three schools rated 'red' (concerned) and 14 schools with some concerns.

Of the three schools rated 'red', one is being monitored under a licensed deficit agreement and the remaining two are being closely monitored. Where schools are recorded as showing some concerns this is mainly due to future budget forecasts showing a possible deficit.

**7. HIGH NEEDS UPDATE****Budget setting 2020/21:**

The High Needs Block is due to increase by £3.881m in 2020/21 from £30.166m to £34.048m. This is a 13% increase, gains were capped at 17%.

The High Needs Block overspend is currently forecast at £1.149m; this is an increase of £0.561m (48%) on the outturn variance from the previous year. If we apply a similar uplift next year we could need £1.700m just to meet our needs for one year. This will include continuing demand from both higher banding levels and the increase in Post 16 uptake.

This funding hasn't been guaranteed beyond a year, so consideration would be needed about the sustainability of any decisions to utilise the funding.

We know we will have increasing pressures beyond 2020/21, especially in Post 16 (expected additional pressure of approximately £300k each year) and we expect the number of EHCP pupils and their level of need to continue to increase. We also will have the new free school coming in to effect, possibly from 2021/22, with initial estimates that this will have an impact of £200k a year on the High Needs Block when fully operational.

**Budget monitoring 2019/20:**

The current forecast for the High Needs Block overspend in 2019/20 is £1.149m, the previous forecast at the beginning of the financial year was £0.850m.

**Special School – Top Up Funding:** adverse variances £0.567m and £0.173m (expected overspend at budget setting £0.352m)

The increase due to additional places purchased in year and the associated top-up funding is approximately £0.266m. Some of this increase is offset by additional top-up funding recovered from other Local Authorities.

The profile of banding continues to move quickly towards higher bands and reflects the increased complexity and need of special school pupils.

The net impact of a drop of 31 Band 6's and an increase of 33 Band 8's is £0.480m. Again, some of this increase is offset by additional income from other Local Authorities. A banding moderation exercise has been planned to provide assurance over banding levels.

**Alternative Provision – adverse variance £0.377m:** In the first 5 months of the 2018/19 FY ACE had an average of 6 primary pupils, the comparative number this year is 19 primary pupils. These pupils are sole registered with ACE.

There has been a 6% increase in the average cost of a bespoke package, but no significant increase in the number of bespoke packages for secondary pupils, compared to same period in the previous year.

In the first 5 months of the 2018/19 FY ACE had an average of 142 standard banded pupils, the comparative number this year is 150 pupils.

Discussion regarding if schools could be given some extra funding to hold these pupils, rather than commissioning a place at ACE as this will offer a saving. AP commented that there will be a working group to consider this and this will

form part of the BMG workplan for this year. **Post 16 – total adverse variance £0.344m:** (expected overspend at budget setting £0.175m)

FE Colleges: City College current cohort forecast is £0.177m higher than forecast at budget setting. Commissioning work is underway to reduce this figure.

Post 16 Providers: in line with expected overspend at budget setting: £0.150m.

### **EHC Assessment and planning:**

Review of the current position regarding capacity to deliver and maintain Education, Health and Care Plans in the City. This report brings some key findings for consideration by Schools Forum and a recommendation around further work.

Overall data: When considering the School Census data, we are seeing an overall increase in the number of school age (5-16 years) children being identified as SEN Support. It is anticipated that we are going to see an increase in the number of requests for Education, Health and Care assessments commensurate with the increase in the SEN support population.

In September 2019 we reached a position of approximately 2100 students with EHC Plans, this shows a more than 2.5% increase in the number of plans over the past year. This is predominantly due to the fact that Education, Health and Care Plans are remaining in place beyond 16 years old and therefore there is a cumulative growth in the number.

### **Data for young people aged 16-25:**

The largest increase in numbers of students with EHCPs that the LA maintain are in the 16–25 age range. As of September 2019, this will be approximately 850 out of 2050 EHCPs. This reflects the national picture in terms of proportion.

The number of requests for year 11 and Post 16 students have steadily increased and the number of Post 16 students in independent service providers, rather than ‘mainstream’ post 16 education has risen from 14 in 2014/2015 to nearly 100 last academic year.

### **0-25 SEND Team:**

In June 2018 Schools Forums agreed the business case for the current 0-25 SEND Team establishment. It maintained a permanent enhanced level of staffing when the SEND Implementation Grant came to an end in March 2019. With agreement of Schools Forum, the team established:

- 1 Team manager and 4 x EHCP Officers (currently 3.6, 0.4 due to start Oct 2019)
- 1 Reviewing Officer
- 1 Caseworker Supervisor and 4.5 Caseworkers (1 full time post currently vacant)
- 1 Apprentice

With the recent review of the current position, there is now a concern that there has not been an increase in the establishment commensurate with the increase in the number of EHC assessments being undertaken and EHC Plans being maintained.

Current pressures are the timeliness of assessments and annual reviews.

	<p>A business case will be prepared to consider the current staffing requirement to be able to meet the increasing demands associated with Education, Health and Care assessment and planning in order that Schools Forum can consider the High Needs Block allocation. It was noted that this would require clear guidance from SMAP as part of the decision making. AP to pick up with commissioning issue with accessing certain courses at City College and Eat that Frog as an EHCP is required.</p> <p><b>Alternative Education provision update:</b></p> <p>The Local Authority have been working with all the schools to review existing provision and consider a way forward and new models of delivery for alternative education provision in the city. A working group was established to produce a report to agree the following three areas of work moving forward :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Primary Phase provision – the group agreed that to reduce the number of children being excluded from school the model of support needed to be based on an early intervention nurturing model. A working group has been established to move forward with the plan to be ready to come back to Schools forum for agreement early 2020</li> <li>▪ Secondary Phase provision- the group agreed that a similar process was required for the secondary age group and the proposal will also come to Schools Forum for agreement early in 2020</li> <li>▪ Quality Assurance Framework – to support schools who use independent providers to deliver alternative education provision the local Authority will, working with schools, develop a framework where all due diligence checks will have been carried out and the school will issue SLAs for individual pupils</li> <li>▪ Medical Needs S 19 – a small working group has been established to consider a new model of delivery for the community based offer for pupils who are not able to attend school due to their medical needs. A paper will come to Schools forum early in 2020 for agreement.</li> </ul> <p>Proposals regarding Alternative Education Provision, and the potential implications for the High Needs Block will be presented to Schools Forum at the February meeting.</p> <p><b>Budget Modelling Group 2019/20:</b></p> <p>The proposed work schedule for Budget Modelling Group has been set. The work programme takes account of the High Needs Block funding announcements and the need for Plymouth to consider the potential impact of this. Work schedule agreed. WC noted High Needs as the focus of work for this year.</p>	<p><b>AP to look into this further</b></p>
<p><b>9. AOB</b></p>	<p>AP informed the group that PCC had received notice of a joint Ofsted and CQC inspection commencing on 18 November; the theme is children's mental health and they are focusing on children between the ages of 10-15 years of age. Inspectors will be focussing on seven children and may wish to visit schools that chosen children are attending.</p>	<p><b>AP to send framework for JTAI</b></p>

<b>10.</b>	<b>Dates of future meetings</b> <b>2019</b> 11 December 2019 – 2pm-4pm at Douglass House  <b>2020</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 15 January 2020 – 2pm-4pm at Douglass House</li><li>▪ 26 February 2020 – 2pm-4pm at Douglass House</li><li>▪ 10 June 2020 – 2pm-4pm at Douglass House</li><li>▪ 11 November 2020 – 2pm-4pm at Douglass House</li><li>▪ 9 December 2020 – 2pm-4pm at Douglass House</li></ul>	
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