



Minutes of the Schools Forum

16 October 2014

-: Present :-

Schools: Primary Roger Hughes, Adam Morris, Adam Tapp, Debbie Main

Maintained: Daneian Rees **Special/PRU** Mike Lock and James Evans, **Early Years:**

Jean Cook **Officers:** Richard Williams (DCS), Lisa Finn (Finance Manager) **Governors:**

Primary Maurice Codd **Secondary** Clive Starr

(Also in attendance: Dorothy Hadleigh (item 1) Finance Officers: Amanda Haley, Curtis Bond, Rob Parr and Susan Moses noted)

1. Update on SEN Dorothy Hadleigh

Dorothy Hadleigh, School Services Manager (SEND) introduced and detailed the yearly update to School Forum regarding High Cost SEN Placements.

School Forum noted that:-

Joint Funded Placements : there are currently 22 children and young people placed in various provisions across the country; 19 of these are placed in the main area of need being Behaviour, Social and Emotional; 3 children were placed with very complex and profound multi learning disabilities (PMLD).

Independent School Placements: there are currently 36 children and young people who are placed with various providers, primarily within Torbay or the neighbouring areas.

School Forum noted that the SEN Team closely monitors and regularly review the progress of each placement and whether outcomes are being achieved but can only do this with what services are available in Torbay.

The Director of Children' s Services emphasised the importance of providing a whole system approach across health, education and social care to ensure positive outcomes for the young people in Torbay. He is planning a review group lead by Debbie Pritchard to look at the whole system approach in providing the best outcomes for young people.

Impact of SEND Reforms: School Forum noted the impact on the legislation which now covers the 0-25 yr age range and the need to monitor the budget due to the difficulty in forecasting unpredicted numbers of requests.

The Chair thanked Dorothy for her contribution to School Forum

Actions;

- i) **School Forum to monitor progress on high cost SEN placement budget**

2. Apologies/Changes to Membership

The Chair requested that the School Clerk co-ordinate the process of nominations/elections of a new Chair and Vice Chair for the group.

School Forum were asked for their nominations for a new Chair and Vice Chair and agreed unanimously to Roger Hughes being elected as Chair and Mike Lock as Vice Chair.

Apologises were received from Frances Ward, Sue Foot and Dan Hallam.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the School Forum of 26th June 2014 were agreed to be accurate

4. Matters Arising

Item 1: Membership: The Chair informed School Forum that a Secondary Governor was already represented and that a Secondary Academy Governor should be sought from second nominee.

Item 3: 7 (i): School Forum Standing Orders and Schools Forum matrix of responsibilities to be circulated (LF/SM)

Item 7 (i) Mechanism to remove Members from School Forum: The Chair Proposed to amend Torbay Standing Orders item 12 to read:-

“The Local Authority may end the appointment of any Forum member before the expiry of his or her term of office if the member concerned ceases to act in accordance with the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership”

School Forum endorsed the proposal to amend item 12 of the Standing Orders.

Item 7 DfE Capital Resources for Kitchens to deliver free School Meals for KS1: now resolved

Item 9: Pupil Premium Plus: Lisa Finn confirmed that Jane Inett has circulated the Pupil Premium Plus Policy Financial 14-15 document to all Headteachers which outlines the responsibilities of the Virtual Headteacher in the allocation of funding

5. Dedication School Grant Forecast Outturn 14/15 including SEN

Lisa Finn, Finance Manager, detailed the forecast outturn from the DfE for the 2014/15 Dedicated School Grant.

School Forum noted that the main areas of under/overspends were attributed to:-
Joint Funded placements and Independent special school costs (overspend £23k)
Statements Pupils and recoupment from other LA (underspend £26k)
Statementing contingency (underspend £50k)
Interim Tuition (underspend £189k)

School Forum recommended that any underspend is carried forward in the DSG earmarked reserve and held into the next financial year 2015/16

Action

- i) **School Forum to consider allocation of DSG earmarked reserve to schools following detailed discussions in January 2015 (LF)**

6. Statementing contingency

Lisa Finn, Finance Manager introduced the Statementing Funding report for 13/14 and 14/15 which illustrated an increase in the number of pupils and FTE's with a statement. An underspend of £50k is anticipated based on data for 14/15 in yr adjustments and same allocation profile as 13/14.

7. Equal Pay update

Lisa Finn, Finance Manager informed School Forum that following discussions with the Local Authority solicitors, the Director of Children's Services and Executive Head of Finance have agreed that the earmarked reserve should remain intact until July 2016.

School Forum discussed and questioned the rationale of allocating the £500,000 to schools with a memorandum of understanding that schools would be asked to recoup money to the Local Authority in the event of an increase in the number of claims. It was noted that ultimately the Local Authority is liable for any risks.

School Forum recommended that the Director of Children's Services seek further clarification on this proposal.

Action

- i) **Director of Children's Services to consult with Legal Team around a memorandum of understanding with schools and update School Forum at next meeting (RW)**

8. Fair Funding

Rob Parr, Principal Accountant, informed School Forum that following a review of the minimum funding levels by the EFA, Torbay's forecast DSG allocation for 2015/16 is now estimated to increase by approx £1.5m.

School Forum were asked to consider the recommendation of how best to allocate this extra funding and to put forward proposals to the Director of Children's Services.

School Forum discussed possible projects that could be supported as well as Interim Tuition, SEN, Early Years and Mobility. A working party will be set up, meeting the week beginning 3rd and 17 November, to look at identifying priority areas which will include a review of all the sub-formulae. Members of School Forum will be invited to attend.

Actions

- i) **Representative from School Forum to be elected and invited to a working party meeting (FAR) (RH/LF)**
- ii) **School Forum to consider recommendations of FAR on identified priority areas and make recommendations to the Director of Children's Services at the next meeting (LF)**

9. Standing item: Monitoring of Projects

The Director of Children's Services presented the update on School Forum's initiatives.

School Forum noted that:-

CAMHS: Staff recruitment has been successful.

Education Safeguarding Service: Two TESS Education Social Workers have been appointed (Sara James and Hayley Mason) and are based at Paignton Community & Sports Academy alongside the SEN and safeguarding team.

Virtual School: Adverts have been posted for the Primary Teacher and interviews will be held on 17th October.

The Director of Children's Service asked School Forum to consider a proposal by the Devon Studio School to access to the TESS service.

School Forum considered the proposal and discussed the funding and capacity issues of the TESS service to support referrals from the Devon Studio School. Taking into consideration the small number of young people and a duty to safeguard young people in an education setting it was agreed, by School Forum, that the Devon Studio School could access the TESS service subject to a charge. South Devon College was discussed and it was agreed that they should not access the service.

Appendix 2: The Director of Children’s Services updated the School Forum on the staff changes to the Education structure within Children’s Services.

Actions

- i) **Children’s Finance to explore charging process for Devon Studio School to access TESS service (LF)**
- ii) **School Forum to review and monitor referral numbers to TESS service (RH/LF)**

10. Future Meeting Dates

The future dates of the School Forum are:

4 th December 2014	0900-1130	Mezzanine 3 Tor Hill House
8 th January 2015	0900-1130	Boardroom Town Hall
5 th March 2015	0900-1130	Boardroom Town Hall

Action

- i) **Future dates to be planned (RH/LF)**