

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Virtual meeting to be held at 10.00 am on Tuesday 12 January 2021

If you wish to join this virtual meeting but are not a member of the Schools Forum, please email Schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

To note any apologies for absence

2. Substitute Members

To welcome any substitute Members.

3. Forum Membership (Enclosure)

To note the Forum membership report.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting (Enclosure)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 20 October 2020.

5. Matters Arising

To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the 20 October 2020 meeting that are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

6. High Needs Block Monitoring 2020/21 (Enclosure)

To consider the HNB monitoring update for 2020/21.

7. Consideration of the Schools Budget 2021/22

a) Schools Budget 2021/22 (Enclosure)

To consider the report about the Schools Budget for 2021/22, including information on each of the 4 funding blocks:

- Schools Block;
- High Needs Block;
- Early Years Block;
- Central School Services Block.

b) Schools Block Transfer Consultation – Analysis and Responses (Enclosure)

To consider the Consultation Analysis and Responses.

**c) Recommendations from the Forum Chairman's Group Budget Meeting
(To be presented at the Forum meeting on 12 January 2021)**

To consider the recommendations from the Forum Chairman's Group on 7 January 2021, in relation to the Schools Budget for 2021/22.

d) Formal Forum Decisions relating to the Schools Budget 2021/22 (Enclosure)

To consider and vote on the formal Forum decisions relating to the Schools Budget 2021/22.

8. Recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group (Enclosure)

To consider the recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group meeting held on 8 December 2020.

9. Recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group (Enclosure)

To consider the recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group meeting held on 3 December 2020.

10. Recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group (Enclosure)

To consider the recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group meeting held on 1 December 2020.

11. Urgent Business

No items have been considered using the Forum's Urgent Business procedure since the last Forum meeting.

12. Forum Correspondence (Enclosure)

To consider the Forum related correspondence received since the last meeting, that is not included within working group reports.

13. Any Other Business

14. Date of Future Meetings (Enclosure)

To note that the next scheduled Forum meeting will be held at 10.00am Thursday 18 March 2021 at County Hall, Preston, subject to COVID-19 implications.

A draft schedule of Forum meetings for the academic year 2021/22 is attached for consideration.

Lancashire Schools Forum meeting of 12 January 2021 at County Hall, Preston

Executive Summary

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence and 2. Substitute Members

To note attendance and apologies for absence and welcome any substitute members.

3. Forum Membership

To note the Forum membership changes since the last meeting.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting and 5. Matters Arising

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 20 October 2020 and any matters arising.

6. High Needs Block Monitoring 2020/21

To consider the High Needs Block monitoring update for 2020/21.

7. Consideration of the Schools Budget 2021/22

a) Schools Budget 2021/22

To consider the report about the Schools Budget for 2021/22, including information on each of the 4 funding blocks:

- Schools Block;
- High Needs Block;
- Early Years Block;
- Central School Services Block

b) Schools Block Transfer Consultation – Analysis and Responses

To consider the Consultation Analysis and Responses from the consultation about transferring Schools Block Headroom to the Early Years Block in 2021/22.

c) Recommendations from the Forum Chair's Group Budget Meeting

To consider the recommendations from the Forum Chair's Group on 7 January 2021, in relation to the Schools Budget for 2021/22.

d) Formal Forum Decisions relating to the Schools Budget 2021/22

To consider and vote on the formal Forum decisions relating to the Schools Budget 2021/22.

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report, including the 2021/22 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations and the budget proposals for each of the 4 funding block;**
- b) Note the recommendations from the Forum Chair's Group meeting on 7 January 2021 (to be presented at the Forum meeting on 12 January);**
- c) Support the Schools Budget proposals for 2021/22 for the Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years and Central School Services Blocks;**
- d) Support the Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve underwriting the uncertainties around the Schools Budget 2021/22;**
- e) Formally approve the budget lines requiring Forum agreement (as set out at item 6d).**
- f) Express any views to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet when setting the 2021/22 Schools Budget.**

8. Recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group held on 8 December 2020.

i. School Block Funding 2021/22 and local modelling and numbers

This report provided an update on schools block modelling for 2021/22 and local pupil number data from the October 2020 school census.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

ii. Consultation on the Possible Schools Block Transfer to the Early Years Block

The initial estimates suggest that the implementation of the National School Funding Formula (NFF) methodology in Lancashire is affordable as the local funding formula and modelling indicates that there could still be circa £2m of headroom available in 2021/22. The county council has therefore issued a consultation with the schools seeking views on a possible transfer of headroom only, from the Schools Block to be used in the Early Years Block.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Expressed support for the proposed Schools Block transfer to Early Years Block;*
- c) Noted that final decisions would be taken by the Forum in January when school consultation responses and final DSG allocations would be available.*

iii. School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme

Each year, reports are presented to the Forum about the arrangements for the School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme. This report provided information around scheme arrangements in 2020/21 and proposals for 2021/22

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Supported the proposed 2021/22 School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme arrangements.*

iv. Schools Expansion Funding 2021/22

The School Expansion: Policy for Additional Revenue Funding provides support for basic need growth commissioned by the LA. Information was provided about the level of MPF to be used in the 2021/22 Expansion Funding Policy.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Supported the use of the higher MPF levels in the 2021/22 School Expansion Funding Policy, incorporating pay and pensions uplifts as the level most reflective of the additional costs being borne by schools for extra pupils*

v. *Covid workforce fund to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges*

On 27 November 2020, the DfE announced new funding to support schools and colleges during Covid pandemic. The Covid workforce fund is to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges and information about the details and conditions of the fund were provided.

The Working Group

a) *Noted the report.*

vi. *Update on exceptional cost claim related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March to July 2020*

DfE have now assessed all claims for costs outside of the three eligible categories and have determined there are no new categories of extraordinary costs that they are able to reimburse.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the report.*

vii. *The Cost of a New School*

An update was provided about the possibility of new school provision being required in certain areas to meet this demand, and the revenue funding implications associated with this.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the information.*

viii. *Covid Winter Grant Scheme (FSM during Christmas holiday period)*

Members enquired if there was any information available from the county council about the Covid Winter Grant Scheme. Information was confirmed that the government announced a package of extra targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the information.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working groups recommendations.

9. Recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group held on 3 December 2020.

i. *SEND/AP Strategy Update*

Dr Sally Richardson, Head of the Inclusion Service attended the working Group for this item. Sally discussed key issues raised by the working group at previous meetings, including the drivers behind the increases in the Out County budget, including increased number of pupils needing placements and rises in the costs of provision. Information was provided about some of the strategies being deployed to control expenditure, which included the commissioning arrangements.

The Working Group

a) *Noted the report;*

b) *Agreed to consider any funding implications that would support the various High Needs Block strategies going forward.*

ii. High Needs Block Commissioned Places 2021/22

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations require that the Forum is consulted annually on the places to be commissioned by the local authority in different schools and other institutions, and on the arrangements for paying top-up funding. This report provided an update about the proposed HNB places to be commissioned for 2021/22, including those place numbers submitted on the DfE on the annual place change notification submission. All the changes to commissioned places relate to the 2021/22 academic year.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Supported the HNB commissioned places set out in the report.*

iii. Historic Commitments Combined Budget Funding 2021/22 (MASH)

Information on DfE School Funding announcements for 2021/22 included confirmation that the historic commitments element of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) will decrease by a further 20% from April 2021. This report provided information from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) giving a 2020 update.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Agreed to bear the information provided in mind when setting the 2021/22 Schools Budget.*

iv. HNB Teachers Pay and Pensions Grant

For 2021/22 the DfE have incorporated the teachers' pay grant (TPG) and teachers' pension employer contribution grant (TPECG) within the high needs national funding formula. Information was provided on options for incorporating this allocation in Lancashire special school and PRU budgets from April 2021.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Supported the proposed methodology for allocating Teachers' pay and employer contribution funding in 2021/22.*

v. School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme

Each year, reports are presented to the Forum about the arrangements for the School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme. This report provided information around scheme arrangements in 2020/21 and proposals for 2021/22

The Working Group

- c) Noted the report;*
- d) Supported the proposed 2021/22 School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme arrangements.*

vi. High Needs Block Termly Redetermination Process

Some data issues have occurred in the High Needs Block Termly Redetermination Process, partly due to changes in the arrangements for processing the data in the Inclusion Service. The service have looked into this and intend to make a permanent additional appointment to the service for

someone responsible for dealing with the data. Appointments are expected after Christmas and this should improve the data validity going forward.

In addition, for the HNB autumn term 2020 redeterminations the higher of autumn 2020 and autumn 20196 has been used. Statements will be issued in the normal way and an additional letter will be issued to each school explaining the calculation and if any top up protection has been included in the redetermination.

PRU representatives reported that the Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact on the NOR at short stay schools and suggested that protections are again need in the spring term 2021,

The Working Group:

- a) *Notes the information;*
- b) *Support the extension of HNB redetermination protections into the spring term 2021.*

vii. *Update on exceptional cost claim related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March to July 2020*
DfE have now assessed all claims for costs outside of the three eligible categories and have determined there are no new categories of extraordinary costs that they are able to reimburse.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report.*

viii. *Covid workforce fund to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges*
On 27 November 2020, the DfE announced new funding to support schools and colleges during Covid pandemic The Covid workforce fund is to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges and information about the details and conditions of the fund were provided.

The Working Group

- a) *Noted the report.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working groups recommendations.

10. Recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group

To consider the recommendations from the Early Years Block Working Group held on 1 December 2020.

i. *Early Years Block Funding 2021/22*

Information was provided about the Chancellor's November 2020 announcements of additional £44m for early years education in 2021/22. A draft letter from the working group Chair to the Schools Forum was shared with members, which highlighted the significant pressures being faced by the sector and asked for consideration of three measures:

- Funding for the 2021 spring term, with at least a similar measure as applied this term in comparing it with spring 2020;
- A one off Covid support payment for each setting;
- Additional funding for the whole of the next financial year.

The Working Group

- a) *Noted the report;*

b) Supported the submission of the letter from the Chair of the EYB Working Group.

ii. SEN Inclusion Fund

Following concerns raised at the last meeting, the Chair wrote to the Inclusion Service expressing concerns about inclusion related matters. Subsequently, the Chair, plus a small group of other representatives, have met with the Inclusion Service colleagues to discuss the issue raised.

Members also asked if there was any feedback from the OfSTED SEND inspection of the Authority, to which some colleagues had contributed and officers agreed to check with Inclusion Service colleagues.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Welcomed the actions from the meeting with Inclusion Service colleagues;*
- c) Requested that the Group be kept informed of developments.*

iii. Take-up of Funded Places.

Information was shared with the group analysing the take-up of funded places in Lancashire. Figures showed a reduction in the take-up of 2 year old places in the county and further analysis revealed some significant variations on a district by district basis.

Officers explained that a number of initiatives were being developed to promote further take-up, both county wide, and targeted at districts with the lowest take-up.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the information;*
- b) Welcomed the initiatives being developed to increase take-up, including the coordination of promotional messages using settings communication channels.*

The Forum are asked to ratify the Working groups recommendations.

11. Urgent Business

No decisions have been taken using the Forum urgent business procedure since the last meeting.

12. Forum Correspondence

To consider the Forum related correspondence received since the last meeting, that is not included within working group reports.

13. Any Other Business

There are no items of AOB.

14. Date of Future Meetings

To note that the next scheduled Forum meeting will be held at 10.00am Thursday 18 2021 at County Hall, Preston, subject to COVID-19 implications.

A draft schedule of Forum meetings for the academic year 2021/22 is attached for consideration.

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 3

Title: Forum Membership

Executive Summary

This report summarises the changes to the Forum membership since the last meeting.

Forum Decision Required

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report,**
- b) Welcome Karen Stephens, Jane Eccleston, Delyth Mathieson, and Millie Dixon to their first Forum meeting;**
- c) Thank Anne Kyle and Suzanne Edwards for their contribution to the Forum.**

Background

This report provides information on Forum membership issues that have arisen since the last Forum meeting. Details are provided below.

Primary Governor Vacancy

3 nominations for a primary school governor vacancy on the Forum went forward into an election process in the autumn term 2020, in which all maintained primary school governing bodies were entitled to vote.

50 votes were cast in the election, representing an 11% turnout.

Karen Stephens, a governor at Woodlea Junior School was successful in the election process, receiving 28 votes (56%)

Members will wish to welcome Karen to the Forum

PRU Headteacher

Anne Kyle has left her post as head of Oswaltwistle School to take up a new role as an executive Head for SEMH and Alternative Provision for St Helens Council.

PRU headteachers have nominated Jane Eccleston, the head at Acorns School, as their new representative.

Members will wish to thank Anne for her contribution to the Forum and welcome Jane to her first meeting.

Head of School Improvement

Members may be aware that Suzanne Edwards has now left the county council to return to headship and Delyth Mathieson has been appointed as the permanent Head of School Improvement.

Members will wish to thank Suzanne for her contribution to the Forum and welcome Delyth to her first meeting.

School Forum Finance Support Officer

Millie Dixon has recently been appointed as the School Forum Finance Support Officer.

Millie has attended the working group meetings in December, but the full Schools Forum will wish extend a formal welcome.

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 10:00 A.M. ON TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2020
(Virtual meeting via Zoom)

Present:

Schools Members:**Primary School Governors**

Ian Ball
 Stephen Booth
 Gerard Collins
 Eleanor Hick
 Michelle O'Neill
 Karen Stracey
 Robert Waring

Primary School Headteachers

Daniel Ballard
 Sarah Barton
 Neil Gurman
 Deanne Marsh
 Keith Wright

Secondary School Governors

Janice Astley
 John Davey
 Brian Rollo

Secondary School Headteachers

Steve Campbell
 Ivan Catlow

Academy Governor

Helen Dicker
 Kathleen Cooper
 Chris McConnachie
 Louise Shaw

Academy Principal/Headteacher

Gaynor Gorman
 Matt Eastham
 James Keulemans

Alternative Provision Academy

Stephanie Carter (sub for Holly Clarke)

Special School Academy**Special School Governor****Special School Headteacher**

Peter Higham
 Shaun Jukes (LSF Chair)

Short Stay Governor

Sandra Thornberry

Short Stay Headteacher

Anne Kyle

Nursery School Headteacher

Jan Holmes

Nursery School Governor**Members:****Early Years - PVI**

Sharon Alexander
 Peter Hindle
 Anne Peat

Observers

David Fann (NAHT)
 Stephen Jones (NASUWT)
 Phil Hart (ASCL)
 Les Ridings (NEU)
 Ian Watkinson (NEU)
 Sam Ud-din (LASGB)

Other Voting Members

Rosie Fearn
 Sam Johnson

Observers - Members of the Public

Paul Hannant
 Alison Knight
 CC Jennifer Mein

In attendance: Paul Bonser
Alex Brown
Sarah Callaghan
Matt Dexter
Susanne Edwards
Christine Hurford
Sally Richardson
Jane Rimmer
Kevin Smith
Lorraine Stephen

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from: Jenny Birkin, Laura Brennan, Thelma Cullen, Mark Jackson, Angela Johnstone, Louise Martin, Lydia Mannion, Alan Porteous, CC Jayne Rear, Lorimer Russell-Hayes and Laurence Upton.

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Stephen Jones (NASUWT) was present as a substitute for Eric Harrison. Stephanie Carter represented Coal Clough Academy.

3. FORUM MEMBERSHIP

The Forum noted a number of membership changes since the last meeting, including:

New Members

Academy representatives

- Kathleen Cooper, a governor at Bishop Rawstorne Academy
- James Keulemans, Headteacher of Clitheroe Royal Grammar School
- Matt Eastham, Headteacher at Penwortham Priory Academy

Primary Headteacher

- Keith Wright, Headteacher at Westgate Primary School

NEU

- Sarah Troughton, Branch Secretary
- Ian Watkinson, Branch Chair

ASCL

- Phil Hart, the new ASCL Regional Officer for the North West

Members leaving the Forum

Secondary Governor

- Lorimer Russell-Hayes

NEU

- Julie Gordon

ASCL

- Liz Laverty. (Liz intends to continue as a co-opted member of the Forum High Needs Block Working Group in her capacity as a short stay school governor).

RC Diocese

- Tim Warren

Head of Schools Finance

- Andrew Good, Head of Service for Development and Schools

School Forum Finance Support Officer

- Christine Hurford, School Forum Finance Support Officer is to retire shortly and the Forum meeting on 20 October 2020 will be her last. Christine has worked for the county council for over 17 years and has supported the work of the Forum since 2011. It is due to Christine's professionalism and efficiency that the Forum operates smoothly and effectively.

The Forum

- Noted the report,**
- Welcomed James Keulemans, Matt Eastham, Keith Wright, Ian Watkinson, Sarah Troughton, Karen Stephens and Phil Hart to their first Forum meeting;**
- Welcomed Kathleen Cooper back to the Forum;**
- Thanked Lorimer Russell-Hayes, Tim Warren, Julie Gordon, Liz Laverty and Andrew Good for their contribution to the Forum;**
- Thanked Christine Hurford for her contribution to the Forum and wished her well in her retirement**

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 2 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes of 2 July 2020 that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCHOOLS BLOCK WORKING GROUP

A report was presented setting out the recommendations from the Schools Block Working Group held on 22 September 2020

i. Schools Budget Outturn, School Balances and Clawback 2019/20 – Update report

This report provided further detailed analysis of the outturn position at 31 March 2020, including detailed budget monitoring tables along with a commentary on key issues.

For the Schools Block, it was noted that:

- The Schools Block outturn position for 2019/20 shows an underspend of £3.969m;
- The underspend in the Schools Block is related to a number of variances including DSG income caused by adjustments in relation to schools becoming academies, underspend on growth allocations, income from rate and appeals, etc.;
- Now that Lancashire has agreed to adopt the National Funding Formula (NFF) as the local funding formula, there is limited variance on other aspects of this funding block,

as budgets for Lancashire mainstream schools use the same methodology that is applied to calculate our DSG Schools Block allocation.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the report and the additional 2019/20 outturn information provided.*

ii. Schools Block Funding 2021/22

An update was provided about the key DfE announcements about school funding for 2021/22, including:

- Rolling grant funding into the schools NFF;
- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index 2019 update.

Information about the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) proposed for the local funding formula in 2021/22 was also provided including the consultation with schools.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the report and the information provided*

Subsequent to the Working Group meeting the MFG consultation closed and the analysis of responses were provided for the Forum, as set out below:

Question 5: Do you agree that the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) level should be set at +2.0% in the Lancashire formula in 2021/22?				
	Total Responses	Yes	No	Not sure
Primary	156	108	7	41
		69%	5%	26%
Secondary	12	9	0	3
		75%	0%	25%

Comments received during the consultation relating to the MFG rate were also provided for members.

The Forum:

- Noted the consultation analysis and comments;***
- Unanimously recommended that the level of MFG to be used in the Lancashire funding formula for 2021/22 be set at +2.0%.***

iii. Service De-delegations 2021/22

This report provided information on a consultation seeking views about which services should be de-delegated for 2021/22 are:

- Staff costs – Public Duties/Suspensions;
- Heritage Learning Service (Museum Service) - Primary Schools Only;
- Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty;
- Primary Inclusion Hubs - Primary Schools Only

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report and the interim consultation information provided;
- b) Suggested that PHiL and LASSH colleagues could be contacted and asked to promote consultation responses;
- c) Individual members agreed to encourage responses from their own schools and clusters;
- d) Requested that further Inclusion Hub impact analysis be presented to a future meeting, when time allowed;
- e) Supported the proposed eform voting arrangements for the de-delegations, following an opportunity for discussions at the Forum meeting on 20 October 2020.

Subsequent to the Working Group meeting the De-delegation consultation closed and the analysis of responses were provided for the Forum.

Thanks were expressed to Forum, PHiL and LASSH colleagues for promoting the consultation and overall responses were now higher than for last year's consultation.

The final Service De-delegations 2021/22 consultation analysis is shown below

Question 1: What is your preferred de-delegation option for the Staff Costs - Public Duties/Suspensions in 2021/22?						
	Total Responses	Continue at the 2020/21 levels	Continue but reduce Trade Union Facilities Time contribution	Continue but no Trade Union Facilities Time contribution	Completely discontinue	Not sure
Primary	156	105	28	2	6	15
		67%	18%	1%	4%	10%
Secondary	12	4	7	0	0	1
		33%	59%	0%	0%	8%
Total Pri & Sec	168	109	35	2	6	16
		65%	21%	1%	4%	10%

Question 2: Do you support the de-delegation of the Heritage Learning Service (Museums Service) in 2021/22? (Primary schools only)				
	Total Responses	Yes	No	Not sure
Primary	156	112	27	17
		72%	17%	11%

Question 3. Do you support the de-delegation of Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty in 2021/22?				
	Total Responses	Yes	No	Not sure
Primary	156	123	22	11
		79%	14%	7%
Secondary	12	9	2	1
		75%	17%	8%

Question 4. Do you support the de-delegation of funding for Primary Inclusion Hubs in 2021/22?				
	Total Responses	Yes	No	Not sure
Primary	156	98	39	19
		63%	25%	12%

Comments received during the consultation relating to de-delegations were also provided for members. This included a suggestion that, in future, it may be more appropriate to have a separate Facilities Time de-delegation (and separate public duties and suspensions de-delegation) to enable greater consistency with the standalone Facilities Time buy-back option that is available to academies.

In addition, a paper was presented providing an update on Inclusion Hubs and on the future proposals.

It was noted that the normal range of evaluation and impact data sets for 2019/20, including exclusions and attendance, cannot be trusted to be reliable, nor to be necessarily attributable to any involvement the Primary Inclusion Hubs have had in schools. A revision of the reporting requirements of the Primary Inclusion Hubs was proposed to include a widened and more specific range of impact data. An initial example set of suggestions was included in the report.

The report also included feedback from the majority of Primary Inclusion Hub Lead Head teachers and incorporated examples of actions that have made a positive impact and issues that had been raised that could be improved.

Members considered the consultation responses and the supplementary information provided and debated each of the de-delegation proposals for 2021/22.

It was noted that the Alternative Provision strategy be considered for Lancashire could impact on the Inclusion Hub proposals. Some members expressed concern about the current Inclusion Hub arrangements and favoured a more flexible approach where schools could perhaps buy-back a service as required, others spoke positively about the impact hubs were having in their district.

As recommended by the Working Group, an eform was issued after the Forum meeting enabling maintained primary school representatives and maintained secondary school representatives to vote on the de-delegation proposals relating to their phases. The eform link was circulated with a report to the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board October 2020, which provided the latest Exclusions data.

The Forum:

- a) Noted the de-delegation consultation analysis and comments;**
- b) Noted the supplementary information relating to Inclusion Hubs;**
- c) Primary school members voted on each of the possible de-delegations affecting primary schools and secondary school members voted on each of the possible de-delegations affecting secondary schools, as set out below. :**

i.	Primary school members voted to de-delegate Staff costs – Public Duties/Suspensions for primary schools in 2021/22, at 2020/21 levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 Votes for de-delegation at the 2020/21 levels;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Vote for de-delegation but with a reduced Trade Union Facilities Time contribution; • 0 Votes for de-delegation but with no reduced Trade Union Facilities Time contribution; • 0 Votes for completely discontinuing the de-delegation • 0 Abstentions
ii.	<p>Secondary school members voted to de-delegate Staff costs – Public Duties/Suspensions for secondary schools in 2021/22, at 2020/21 levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Votes for de-delegation at the 2020/21 levels; • 1 Vote for de-delegation but with a reduced Trade Union Facilities Time contribution; • 0 Votes for de-delegation but with no reduced Trade Union Facilities Time contribution; • 0 Votes for completely discontinuing the de-delegation • 0 Abstentions
iii.	<p>Primary school members voted to de-delegate the Heritage Learning Service for primary schools in 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 Votes for de-delegation • 1 Vote against de-delegation • 1 Abstention
iv.	<p>Primary school members voted to de-delegate Schools In Financial Difficulty, for primary schools in 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 Votes for de-delegation • 1 Vote against de-delegation • 0 Abstentions
v.	<p>Secondary school members voted to de-delegate Schools In Financial Difficulty, for secondary schools in 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Votes for de-delegation • 0 Votes against de-delegation • 0 Abstentions
vi.	<p>Primary school members voted to de-delegate the Primary Inclusion Hubs for primary schools in 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14Votes for de-delegation • 2 Votes against de-delegation • 1 Abstention

d) Requested that consideration be given to having a separate Facilities Time de-delegation and public duties and suspensions de-delegation in future years.

iv. Financial transparency of local authority maintained schools and academy trusts: Government consultation response

A government response to the Transparency consultation has now been published and this report highlighted the key areas.

The new requirements to be implemented over the coming years largely aimed at LAs but there are some implications for schools. However, some national requirements are already operating in Lancashire, which minimises impact for Lancashire schools. Further information will be provided in due course

Schools need to be aware that from 1 January 2021, schools must publish additional financial information on their website:

- *how many school employees (if any) have a gross annual salary of £100,000 or more in increments of £10,000 (DfE recommend using a table to display this information)*
- *a link to the webpage which is dedicated to your school on the DfE's [schools financial benchmarking](#) service (DfE advise to follow the prompts to find your school's specific page)*

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Noted that information had been provided to schools where implementation of the DfE requirements was imminent;*
- c) Noted that further information would be provided to schools and the Forum on other requirements and local proposals.*

v. Scheme for Financing Schools in Lancashire

In August 2020, the DfE issued a 12th update to Statutory Guidance on schemes. Information was provided on the local scheme amendments being introduced in response to the guidance and on the consultation that was held with schools.

Two of the three sections that have changed are revisions that are 'directed' by the Secretary of State, following earlier consultations. These relate to:

- *Section 4.3: Submission of financial forecasts;*
- *Section 6.5: Planning for deficit budgets.*

The third section included in the revised guidance relates to *Section 12: Insurance*, which has already been introduced in Lancashire.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

Subsequent to the meeting the Scheme consultation closed but no responses were received.

Maintained School Members of the Forum unanimously approved the revised Scheme for Financing Schools in Lancashire.

vi. Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium

In July 2020, the Government announced a £1b Covid catch-up package for the 2020/21 academic year and this report provided details relating to:

- Catch-Up Premium - Schools' allocations will be calculated on a per pupil basis, providing each mainstream school with a total of £80 for each pupil in years reception through to 11, with the funding being paid in 3 tranches. First Tranche has now been paid.
- National Tutoring Programme

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report.*

vii. School funding: exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) for the period from March to July 2020

An updated was provided on the latest DfE Information around 'School funding: exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19).

The DfE have processed the first batch of school claims relating to the exceptional COVID-19 costs. These payments cover claims made under the three standard categories and that did not exceed the claims limit. DfE are giving further consideration to claims for other costs. 122 maintained schools received a payment in this round, totalling circa £600k.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report.*

viii. School Finance - School Visits

During the COVID pandemic School Finance have continued to deliver a traded service to schools, but now access school systems remotely and meet with school colleagues virtually. Views were sought on the continuation of this approach

The Working Group:

- a) *Supported the continuation of the virtual service offering from Schools Finance as the default position.*

The Forum ratified the Working Group's recommendations.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HIGH NEEDS BLOCK WORKING GROUP

A report was presented setting out the recommendations from the High Needs Block Working Group from 29 September 2020.

i. Schools Budget Outturn, School Balances and Clawback 2019/20 – Update report

This report provided further detailed analysis of the outturn position at 31 March 2020, including detailed budget monitoring tables along with a commentary on key issues.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Requested additional information on a couple of specific areas rating to:*
 - *the significant rise in out-county expenditure in 2019/20 (over £5m) and the number of children that were placed in independent provision;*
 - *any update on the development of special educational needs units attached to mainstream schools, particularly in the secondary sector.*

Sally Richardson, Head of Inclusion Service joined the Forum for this item and provided some background to the current challenges facing the service and the actions being taken to respond to the key issues. This included the further development of special educational needs units attached to mainstream schools, and it was noted that a second letter was to be issued to schools seeking interest in the initiative. The long term aim of this strategy was to provide more local placements for children with SEND, which would reduce the out-county expenditure over the longer term.

ii. High Needs Block Monitoring 2020/21

Due to the cost and demand led pressures on the High Needs Block budget, arrangements were introduced from 2018/19 to provide the Forum with termly budget HNB monitoring. The HNB budget is currently forecasting a circa £2.4m underspend at 31 March 2021.

There remained significant concern around the ongoing financial pressures facing this block despite the current monitoring position, as forecasting based on summer term data is uncertain due to COVID-19 implications and the demand and costs could continue rise beyond the growth provision that was able to be included in the budget.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the report.*

iii. High Needs Block Funding 2021/22

This report provided information on 2021/22 funding announcements for the HNB. Members considered the initial DfE information for 2021/22 and commented that it would be helpful if Inclusion Service colleagues could attend future meetings provide the opportunity to discuss SEND and AP strategies and the financial consequences in more detail ahead of deliberations around the High Needs Block budget for 2021/22.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the report;*

b) *Asked that the Chair of the Working Group formally invite Dr Sally Richardson, Head of Inclusion Service, to the next HNB meeting.*

Subsequent to the Working Group meeting, the WG Chair wrote to the Head of the Inclusion Service inviting her to the next working group meeting and the invitation was accepted.

iv. HNB Indicative Commissioned Place Numbers 2021/22

As part of the process agreed with the Schools Forum earlier this year, the county council wrote to all Lancashire special schools and PRUs at the end of the summer term 2020 with an early notification of the indicative number of places we expect to commission in 2021/22, to allow a longer opportunity for representations.

Representations from a number of schools and PRUs had been considered.

The Working Group:

a) *Noted the report.*

Subsequent to the meeting, some increases have been agreed by the Service to commissioned place numbers for short stay schools, but at the present time, the Inclusion

Service have not recommended any changes to commissioned place numbers in special schools beyond the places calculated on the agreed methodology. The Forum report included the current commission place proposals for 2021/22.

v. Representations from Lancashire Short Stay Schools

Correspondence to the Forum and LCC officers has been sent by Lancashire Short Stay Schools. The letter made representations about the financial impact on Short Stay Schools due to Coronavirus and some wider issues about the PRU funding, including the commissioned place methodology.

The group debated the correspondence and possible options for responding to the issues raised.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report and the correspondence from PRU headteachers;*
- b) Supported the proposed protections for PRUs to base autumn term 2020 redeterminations on the higher of October 20 and October 19 census data, to mitigate the impact that COVID-19 may have had on PRU NORs;*
- c) Supported the extension of this autumn term 2020 redeterminations methodology to special schools;*
- d) Noted that the additional costs of this protection were not yet known but that the risk would need to be underwritten by the DSG reserve;*
- e) Welcomed the establishment of the Alternative Provision Governance Group to consult with the sector and support the implementation of the Alternative Provision Strategy;*
- f) Welcomed the appointment of PRU headteachers to sit on this group.*

Subsequent to the working group, the initial meeting of the Alternative Provision Governance Group has taken place and begun to develop terms of reference and an action plan to address the short and medium term actions in the AP strategy.

PRU representatives welcomed the discussions on the AP Strategy for Lancashire

vi. DSG Historic Commitments: Emotional Health and Wellbeing Commissioned Early Help Service Performance Update

DfE announcements make clear that DSG Historic Commitments allocations will continue to reduce to zero across future years and include confirmation that the historic commitments element of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) will decrease by a further 20% from April 2021.

In order to aid Forum consideration of these allocations, a report was provided from the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Commissioned Early Help Service providing a Performance Update for the previous year

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Agreed to be aware of this report when considering the DSG 'combined budget' contributions as part of the budget setting process for 2021/22*

vii. Financial transparency of local authority maintained schools and academy trusts: Government consultation response

A government response to the Transparency consultation has now been published this report highlights the key areas.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;*
- b) Noted that information had been provided to schools where implementation of the DfE requirements was imminent;*
- c) Noted that further information would be provided to schools and the Forum on other requirements and local proposals.*

viii. Scheme for Financing Schools in Lancashire

In August 2020, the DfE issued a 12th update to Statutory Guidance on schemes. Information was provided on the local scheme amendments being introduced in response to the guidance and on the consultation that was held with schools.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

This decision had been agreed under the Schools Block Working Group report.

ix. Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium

In July 2020, the Government have announced a £1b Covid catch-up package for the 2020/21 academic year and this report provided details.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

x. School funding: exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) for the period from March to July 2020

An updated was provide on the latest DfE Information around 'School funding: exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19), including allocations for Lancashire schools.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

xi. School Finance - School Visits

During the COVID pandemic School Finance have continued to deliver a traded service to schools, but now access school systems remotely and meet with school colleagues virtually. Views were sought on the continuation of this approach

The Working Group:

- a) Supported the continuation of the virtual service offering from Schools Finance as the default position.*

The Forum ratified the Working Group's recommendations.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EARLY YEARS BLOCK WORKING GROUP

A report was presented setting out the recommendations from Early Years Block Working Group from 6 October 2020.

i. Schools Budget Outturn, School Balances and Clawback 2019/20 – Update report

This report provided further detailed analysis of the outturn position at 31 March 2020, including detailed budget monitoring tables along with a commentary on key issues and noted some underspends on the SEN Inclusion Fund.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report and the supplementary analysis provided;*
- b) Requested that a meeting be requested with the Head of the Inclusion Service, to discuss SEN related issue that were impact on early years providers, including the underspends on the SEN Inclusion Fund;*
- c) Requested that the Maintained Nursery School Federation be invited to any discussions.*

Subsequent to the Working Group meeting a communication has been sent to Sally Richardson, Head of Inclusion Service requesting a meeting. At the Forum meeting it was agreed that a meeting would be arranged to discuss the early years SEND issues that had been raised.

ii. Urgent Business - Early Education Funding Principles and Methodology for Autumn 2020 Term

Information was provided on the urgent business process seeking Forum views on the proposed funding principles and methodology to be used in Lancashire for the autumn 2020 Term. Information on the revised policy had been circulated to providers.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

iii. EY Sustain

This report provided feedback on the lessons learned from the first round of EY Sustain consultancy. A summary of key findings were set out in the report.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.*

iv. Executive Recovery Board

The Working Group Chair represents PVI providers on the Executive Recovery Board, which is a weekly meeting of school and early years representatives with LCC Directors dealing with COVID-19 related issues. Maintained nursery schools are represented by the Maintained Nursery School Federation. The Chair provided feedback from recent Executive Recovery Board meetings, including some concerns about accessing SEND support.

A response from the service was shared with the group.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Welcomed the early years representation on the Board and the response that had been received in respect of the specific SEND concerns raised;*
- c) *Requested that the distribution list for the communication to be issued to providers be checked, as many settings had not received earlier correspondence.*

Individual members agreed to feed back any relevant issues to the Chair for raising at future Board meetings and to give consideration to any other mechanisms that could be used to encourage wider feedback from the sector.

Subsequent to the Working Group meeting feedback about the distribution list was provided to the service.

The Forum ratified the Working Group's recommendations.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CHAIR'S WORKING GROUP

A report was presented setting out the recommendations from the Chair's Working Group meeting held on 22 September 2020.

i. Schools in Financial Difficulty (SIFD) – Bid for one off financial support for a Lancashire primary school

A report was provided in connection with a bid for one off financial support from a Lancashire primary school.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Supported the allocation of £36,000 from the Schools in Financial Difficulty budget to assist with the recovery at a Lancashire primary school.*

ii. Schools in Financial Difficulty (SIFD) – Bid for one off financial support for a Lancashire special school

A report was provided in connection with a bid for one off financial support from a Lancashire special school.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Supported the allocation of £64,000 from the Schools in Financial Difficulty budget to assist with the recovery at a Lancashire special school.*

iii. Schools in Financial Difficulty (SIFD) – Revised Categorisations

This report provided information on the recent review the SIFD categories in light of the publication of the DfE's response to the financial transparency consultation.

The Working Group:

- a) *Noted the report;*
- b) *Supported the revised SIFD categorisation names, descriptions and financial indicators*
- c) *Supported the publication of the SIFD categorisation on the Forum website.*

The Forum ratified the Working Group's recommendations.

10.LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AREA POSITION ON PAYING STAFF IN SCHOOLS

Members had seen that the Education Coronavirus Bulletin from 6 October 2020 included a message from Edwina Grant OBE, Executive Director Education and Children's Services about the Lancashire County Council Area position about paying staff who have to be at home to look after their own children when they are isolating.

Members were supportive of the position outlined and the Forum Chair referred to email dialogue he had had about the position and about consistent messages from HR.

The Forum requested that Chair to write to Government to make representations on the funding to support this principle, and were keen for this to happen now. Members also asked if similar representations could be encouraged from other NW authorities, particularly those in Tier 3. The Director of Education and Skills made reference to the possibility of issues being raised at the NW regional children's services group.

It was also noted that the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools was supportive of the approach outlined and would also make representations to Government.

The Forum:

- a) Noted the information provided;**
- b) Requested that the Chair write to the Secretary of State;**
- c) Requested that similar representations could be encouraged from other NW authorities.**

11.SUPPLY COVER INSURANCE AND MATERNITY SCHEME FOR LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS – LATE JOINING

The number of schools that change their supply arrangements in year is normally very few or none at all. However, we have recently received contact from a number of schools looking to join the scheme or change the level of cover, with effect from September 2020.

This includes:

- Schools wishing to join the scheme that did not 'buy-in' from April 2020;
- Schools that bought teaching staff cover in April 2020 and now wish to also join the support staff scheme;
- Schools that bought teaching staff cover in April 2020 and now wish to change their cover to reduce the number of waiting days.

In year monitoring data was provided in the report although it was noted scheme monitoring has often proved an unreliable indicator of the year end position due to a number of factors around when schools choose to submit claims, when they are processed by the county council and any late claims or appeals.

Whilst the scheme has a reserve to mitigate against years when claims are high and exceed premiums, the risk is underwritten by the DSG reserve. In such circumstances, the views of the Forum were sought on whether in year changes to scheme membership should be agreed.

Members considered the issues raised in the report.

The Forum:

- a) **Noted the report;**
- b) **Recommended that changes to the level of cover from September 2020 should not be agreed.**

12. URGENT BUSINESS

The Forum's Urgent Business Procedure was used to obtain views about amendments to the Supply Cover Insurance and Maternity Scheme for Lancashire Schools for September 2020 onwards in the light of revised Government guidance.

The report set out the main changes proposed in light of amended government guidance.

Responses by 5.00pm on Monday 24 August 2020 were requested and by the closing date, responses were received from 20 members.

13 responses supported the proposals as originally presented and a further 6 replies supported the proposals but suggested certain amendments. One response opposed the introduction of revised arrangements.

Comments and amendments to the proposals were set out in the report and it was noted that information had been circulated to schools.

Some members had felt that the scheme should continue to support staff who were shielding and cover for pregnant staff beyond 28 weeks was particularly highlighted. It was not felt possible to incorporate this into the scheme, as it did not conform to current LCC HR advice, although national and local guidance will be kept under review.

The Forum:

- a) **Noted the report;**
- b) **Recommended that changes scheme be kept under review in light of any further changes to Government guidance.**

13. PUPIL PREMIUM GRANT + FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 2020/21

This report provided information on the PPG+ Policy for 2020/21. The policy is similar to that operated in previous years and includes the following provision:

The school/setting in which a looked after child is on roll will be allocated £600 per term on receipt of a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is assessed as at least adequate through the Virtual School's quality assurance process. The PEP must demonstrate that the needs of the child/young person have been identified with a clear link to the intended use of the funding and the planned impact.

The remaining £ 545 per CLA will form the PPG+ high needs fund and is utilized for

- To provide additional funding support to be provided for pupils who have additional short term needs identified, or a period of crisis that is impacting directly on learning progress. Schools request this additional funding directly to the Virtual School with

evidence of need, details of proposed use and predicted outcomes/impact. Evidence of impact is also required following an appropriate period.

- To support the wider strategies and activities of the Virtual School to fulfil the statutory duties.

The Forum:

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Requested information on how the PPG+ high needs fund had been utilised.**

14. SCHOOLS FORUM OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS DOCUMENT

The Schools Forum has an operational arrangements document that sets out the working arrangements for the Forum

The document has recently been reviewed following the publication of the Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. A revised operational arrangements document was provided for members. The main changes relate to provisions of the new regulations, which allows the Forum to meet remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic and some minor changes to the membership.

The Forum:

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Approved the updated Schools Forum Operational Arrangements document.**

15. FORUM CORRESPONDENCE

At the last Forum meeting an item was raised that stemmed from a query discussed at the BTLS focus group. It was reported that many aided schools with under 250 staff were unable to access the government scheme providing up to two weeks Statutory Sick Pay for employees who are off sick with Covid-19 symptoms. This was because aided and foundation schools that buy BTLS payroll all appear under one HMRC code. This issue had also impacted on the operation of the apprenticeship levy.

Subsequent to the meeting, the Forum Chair wrote to HMRC about pooled payroll arrangements.

The response from HMRC noted that the pooling of schemes potentially alleviates the administrative burden of multiple returns and payments and indicates that HMRC originally took a relaxed view of these arrangements. However, the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy and the Department for Education (DfE) funding rules have resulted in additional complications with pooled PAYE schemes. As such HMRC published guidance in February 2017 which, HMRC indicated had, resulted in many public sector organisations separating their PAYE schemes.

Members discussed the correspondence and noted that whilst introducing separate payroll/PAYE systems for individual establishments may allow some schools to claim additional funding, the amounts involved were relatively small and would probably be less than the extra costs that would need to be charged to facilitate the individual payroll arrangements.

The Forum:

- a) Noted the report.**

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of AOB.

17. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next scheduled Forum meeting will be held at 10.00am Tuesday 12 January 2021 at County Hall, Preston, subject to COVID-19 implications.

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 6

Title: High Needs Block Monitoring 2020/21

Executive Summary

This report provides high level information on budget monitoring for the High Needs Block from the autumn term 2020/21.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report;**
- b) Express any views about the autumn term 2020/21 High Needs Block, Monitoring;**
- c) Be mindful of this information when making decisions/recommendations about the 2021/22 Schools Budget.**

Background

Due to the cost and demand led pressures on the High Needs Block budget, arrangements were introduced in 2018/19 to provide the Forum with termly budget monitoring.

Provisional autumn term 2020/21 data has now been reviewed to enable an updated forecast position to be estimated for 31 March 2021.

The forecast High Needs block budget position at 31 March 2021 predicts a circa £2m surplus.

This forecast is similar to the monitoring position at the end of the summer term 2020, which was reported to Forum in October 2020.

There remains some concerns around the ongoing financial pressures facing this block, as forecasting data may have been impacted due to COVID-19 implications and the demand and costs are expected to rise in the spring term 2021.

Year end monitoring will be presented to Forum in due course and will provide more detailed analysis, highlights any budget adjustments and set out reasons for significant variances.

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM
Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 7a

Title: Schools Budget 2021/22

Appendices (if applicable) Appendix A refers

Executive Summary

This report has been prepared following receipt of pupil data and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation information from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The report sets out the budget proposals for 2021/22 across the four funding blocks.

A meeting of the Forum Chair's Group, will take place on 7 January 2021. Recommendations arising from this meeting around finalising the Schools Budget 2021/22 will be presented to the Forum on 12 January 2021.

Following consideration of the final Schools Budget proposals by the Forum and the Lancashire County Council, the Authority is required to submit a final Schools Block budget proforma for 2021/22 to the ESFA by 21 January 2021.

This report also provides information on the High Needs, Early Years and Central School Services Blocks for 2020/21, and seeks the formal approval for the budget lines requiring Forum agreement.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report, including the 2021/22 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations and the budget proposals for each of the 4 funding block;**
- b) Note the recommendations from the Forum Chair's Group meeting on 7 January 2021 (to be presented at the Forum meeting on 12 January);**
- c) Support the Schools Budget proposals for 2021/22 for the Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years and Central School Services Blocks;**
- d) Support the Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve underwriting the uncertainties around the Schools Budget 2021/22;**
- e) Formally approve the budget lines requiring Forum agreement (as set out at item 6d).**
- f) Express any views to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet when setting the 2021/22 Schools Budget.**

Background

Recent reports to the Forum and Working Groups have set out the Government's announcements about school funding for 2021/22.

The Dedicated Schools Grant is a ring-fenced specific grant and it must be used in support of the Schools Budget as defined in the Dedicated Schools Grant Conditions of Grant and the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. The Dedicated Schools Grant is allocated to every Local Authority in four funding blocks, each calculated using national funding formulae. The four blocks are:

- Schools Block;
- High Needs Block;
- Early Years Block;
- Central School Services Block.

On 20 July 2020, announcements from the Prime Minister and the Education Secretary confirmed increases in school funding allocations for 2021/22, which are part of the 3 year settlement first publicised for 2020/21, and that provide more than £14bn extra funding over the three year period.

Nationally, school funding allocations will increase by £2.2bn in 2021/22, compared to 2020/21. The 2021/22 allocations are £4.8bn higher compared to 2 years ago when the 2019/20 baseline was established.

These increases relate to the Schools Block and High Needs Block allocations.

Information about the Early Years Block was provided in the Chancellor's autumn spending review statement on 25 November 2020, and indicated that an additional £44m would be made available nationally for early years education in 2021/22.

Further information on each of the funding blocks is provided below and details of the final 2021/22 Dedicated Schools Grant allocations, notified in December 2020, and the proposed Schools Budget expenditure are contained in Appendix 'A'.

Schools Block

The Schools Block funds mainstream primary and secondary schools and academies.

The Schools Block funding framework for 2021/22 will continue to operate under the 'soft' National Funding Formula arrangements first introduced in 2018/19. This is where the allocations for each local authority are calculated on the aggregated individual school National Funding Formula amounts calculated by the Government, but the local authority's local formula still applies in making actual allocations to schools.

Following a previous consultation with schools and academies in the County, and discussions with the Schools Forum, the Cabinet ratified the use of the National Funding Formula as the Lancashire formula methodology from April 2018. This will continue to apply in 2021/22.

Department for Education announcements indicate that funding through the National Funding Formula is increasing by 4% overall in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21. The main features in 2021/22 are:

- The National Funding Formula funding factors will remain unchanged for 2021/22;
- Every mainstream school will be allocated at least 2% more pupil-led funding per pupil compared to its 2020/21 National Funding Formula baseline;
- Additional funding for small and remote schools will increase in 2021/22, with primary schools attracting up to £45,000 through the sparsity factor, and secondary schools up to £70,000;
- Funding from the teachers' pay grant and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant, including the supplementary fund, has been added to schools' National Funding Formula allocations from 2021/22;
- The minimum pupil funding levels have been increased for 2021/22 to take account of the extra funding available and the inclusion of the teachers pay and pensions grants into the National Funding Formula. The minimum pupil funding ensures that schools receive a minimum level of funding calculated by dividing all the pupil led factors plus the lump sum allocation by the number of pupils on roll. The revised minimum pupil funding levels in 2021/22 are:
 - £4,180 per pupil for primary schools;
 - £5,415 per pupil for secondary schools;
- The 2019 update to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index has been incorporated so that deprivation funding allocated through the formulae is based on the latest data, but the banding structure has been amended to minimise turbulence at school level;
- Premises funding will continue to be allocated at local authority level on the basis of actual spend in the 2020/21, with the Private Finance Initiative factor increasing in line with the Retail Price Index (excluding mortgage interest payments) measure of inflation and is set at 1.56%.

Minimum Funding Guarantee

Local authorities will continue to set a Minimum Funding Guarantee in local formulae, which in 2021/22 must be between +0.5% and +2.0%.

The level to be applied in Lancashire is the subject of a consultation with schools and the Schools Forum. The Forum letter to the Cabinet on finalising the Schools Budget for 2021/22 will include a final recommendation on the level of Minimum Funding Guarantee to be applied from April 2021.

Schools Block Transfer

Local authorities will continue to be able to transfer up to 0.5% of their Schools Block to other blocks of the Dedicated Schools Grant, with schools forum approval.

Forecasting undertaken by officers on receipt of the provisional Dedicated Schools Grant allocations for 2021/22 and the initial pupil data from the October 2020 school census, suggested that the implementation of the National School Funding Formula methodology in full in Lancashire may provide circa £2m of headroom in 2021/22. The

majority of this headroom is generated from Lancashire's growth fund allocation, which is calculated outside the National Funding Formula methodology.

In recent years, when headroom has been available this has been transferred to support demand and cost led pressures in other funding blocks. Forecasts suggest that the financial pressures remain most significant on the Early Years Block in 2021/22.

A consultation with the schools seeking views on a possible transfer of headroom only, from the Schools Block to be used in the Early Years Block has therefore been issued.

The Schools Forum's letter to the Cabinet on finalising the Schools Budget for 2021/22 will include a final recommendation on the possible transfer of headroom from Schools Block to be used in the Early Years Block.

High Needs Block

The High Needs Block funds:

- Special Schools budgets;
- Alternative Provision budgets (mainly Pupil Referral Units);
- Special Education Resource Provision Units in mainstream schools;
- Individually Assigned Resources for High Needs pupils across all educational establishments; and
- Certain Special Education Needs Central Schools Services.

The allocation to Lancashire is calculated using a national High Needs Block formula, but the Local Authority's local funding formulae still apply to distribute High Needs funding to Lancashire providers. The national formula is largely unchanged for 2021/22.

The national increase in high needs funding, from 2020/21 to 2021/22, will amount to £730m, which equates to circa 10%.

The high needs national funding formula will ensure that every local authority receives an increase of at least 8% per head of population, with some authorities receiving up to 12% more than this year.

The additional funding is distributed through the formula, which includes:

- **The funding floor** – this ensures that all local authorities' allocations per head of population will increase by a minimum percentage compared to the baseline. For 2021/22, the Department for Education is continuing to keep the funding floor at 8.0%.
- **The limit on gains** – the limit on gains will be 12.0% per head of population compared to the baseline, so that authorities due to gain under the formula see an increase of up to 12.0% before their gains are capped.

The remainder of the additional funding will be distributed through an increase to the proxy factors in the formula, keeping their relative weightings the same as previously. The historic spend factor will remain at the same cash value as in 2020/21.

For 2021/22, the Department for Education has also incorporated the teachers' pay grant and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant amounts within the formula by increasing the basic entitlement factor value to £4,660 for special schools, and through an additional factor in the formula that will enable local authorities to receive funding equivalent to the teachers' pay and pension grant they will receive in 2020/21 for Alternative Provision settings, and to the teachers' pension supplementary fund they will receive.

Early Years Block

Early Years Block funding is utilised for:

- Funding for the universal 15 hours entitlement for three and four year olds;
- Funding for the additional 15 hours entitlement for three and four year old children of eligible working parents;
- Funding for the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged two year olds;
- Funding for the Early Years Pupil Premium;
- Funding for the Disability Access Fund; and
- Supplementary funding for Maintained Nursery Schools.

The Government introduced an Early Years National Funding Formula from April 2017. This arrangement introduced a formulaic mechanism for distributing early years funding from national Government to each local authority, and set a framework that must be used to distribute funding to all types of early education provider, including nursery schools; nursery classes in maintained primary schools; Private, Voluntary and Independent providers and Childminders. The Early Years National Funding Formula introduced a requirement to have a Universal Base Rate for all providers and set out the type and level of supplements that are available.

Government announcements indicate that an additional £44m has been made available nationally for early years education in 2021/22. This level of increase is below that made available for the Schools Block and High Needs Blocks.

Central School Services Block

This Block is to fund central functions that local authorities carry out on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies in England. The Central School Services Block was first introduced in 2018/19, and effectively replaced the previous Education Services Grant allocations, but the levels of funding have reduced considerably over recent years.

The Central School Services Block allocation for local authorities is split into funding for historic commitments and funding for ongoing responsibilities.

The ongoing responsibilities element of funding is calculated by the Department for Education on a formulaic methodology based on pupil numbers and deprivation, plus an area cost adjustment. The historic commitments element of the Block funds certain ongoing obligations funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant.

For 2021/22, the Department for Education funding announcements indicate that the ongoing responsibilities funding will increase by 4% compared to 2020/21, but in line with previous announcements, funding for historic commitments will decrease by 20%. The Department for Education have indicated that they will continue to unwind the historic commitments funding to zero in future years.

Final Dedicated Schools Grant Allocation 2021/22

Details of Lancashire's final Dedicated Schools Grant allocations for 2021/22 for each funding block, and the expenditure proposals for each block are provided at Appendix 'A'.

Financial Implications

The report forecasts a balanced Dedicated Schools Grant funding position in 2021/22, which will be underwritten by the Dedicated Schools Grant reserves.

It should also be noted that the Department for Education have tightened the ring-fencing around the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2020/21 onwards to ensure that local authorities do not make provisions in their general reserves to cover possible Dedicated Schools Grant deficits and any deficits would be carried forward into future years and then repaid overtime. A number of other local authorities are already working with the Department for Education to agree recovery plans to repay deficits.

To date, Lancashire has always contained any school funding pressures within the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Dedicated Schools Grant reserve at 31 March 2020 was £11.151m.

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) 2021/22

Final Dedicated Schools Grant allocations for 2021/22 were published by the Department for Education on 17 December 2020.

Lancashire's Gross 2021/22 Dedicated Schools Grant allocation is £1,090.214m.

The equivalent Gross Dedicated Schools Grant income figure for 2020/21 was £1,003.852m. The 2021/22 figure is over £86m higher than the previous year.

This increase in funding is due to:

- Lancashire's share of the increased £2.2b funding nationally made available by Government, including £730m for the High Needs Block;
- Lancashire's share of the increased £44m nationally for the Early Years Block;
- Incorporation of funding for the teachers pay and pensions grants in the Schools, High Needs and Central Schools Services Blocks that were previously paid as separate grants;
- An increase in the overall numbers of pupils in Lancashire compared to 2020/21.

Whilst there is additional funding in the education system, some schools and providers are only receiving inflationary level increases in funding compared to 2020/21, especially when unpredictable covid-19 related costs are factored in, and many may continue to face financial challenges.

The sections below provide further details of the Lancashire Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations and present the estimated Schools Budget for 2021/22.

DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) ALLOCATIONS 2021/22

The Department for Education sub-divide the Dedicated Schools Grant allocations into 4 funding blocks: the Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early Years Block and the Central Schools Services Block (CSSB). These Blocks are all calculated on a formulaic basis.

Information on the allocations for each of the funding blocks is provided below:

Schools Block allocation (£849.944m)

The Schools Block allocations for 2021/22 are derived on the basis of illustrative individual Schools National Funding Formula (SNFF) allocations calculated by the Government. These calculations translate into primary and secondary units of funding for 2021/22. These units of funding are multiplied by the number of primary and secondary pupils from the October 2020 census. A Local Authority level allocation for premises factors and growth funding are added to provide a final Schools Block allocation.

For 2021/22, the allocation also includes an amount relating to funding for the teachers pay and pensions grants that were previously paid as separate grants.

This provides a total Lancashire Schools Block allocation for 2021/22 of £849.944m.

The 2021/22 Schools Block allocation is over £68m higher than the equivalent figure in 2020/21. The increased allocation is in part due to Lancashire's share of the additional funding made available nationally by the Government and the inclusion of funding from the teachers' pay grant and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant in the schools' National Funding Formula allocations from 2021/22.

In addition, there are 841 more pupils across Lancashire primary and secondary schools, which generates additional Schools Block income, but will also produce extra costs in the budget.

High Needs Block allocation (£151.033m)

The 2021/22 High Needs Block allocation is calculated under the Government's national High Needs funding formula. Key features of the formula include:

- A historic spending allocation to assist with transition to the national high needs formula;
- A flat rate of £4,660 per annum for each pupil in special schools or student in special post-16 institutions, ensuring local authorities receive a broadly equivalent basic level of funding for pupils with high needs in both mainstream schools and outside the mainstream sector. For 2021/22, this factor has been increased by £660 per pupil relating to funding for the teachers pay and pensions grants that were previously paid as separate grants;
- A number of proxy measures including the following factors:
 - 2-18 population;
 - deprivation;
 - low attainment;
 - health and disability.
- An import/export adjustment for high needs pupils;
- An allocation for Hospital education and some additional Alternative Provision teachers pay/pension costs.

The formula provides a 2021/22 High Needs Block allocation for Lancashire of £151,032,906.

This figure is over £15m higher than the equivalent 2020/21 allocation, and is largely due to increased funding for the High Needs Block made available by the Government and the uplift for the teachers' pay grant and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant which now form part of the national High Needs Block funding formula.

It should be noted that the High Needs Block allocation is a provisional allocation and the gross total includes allocations attributable to funded places that will be deducted and made directly by the ESFA. These are estimated by ESFA to total circa £8.402m.

Early Years Block allocation (£82.472m)

Allocations for the Early Years Block include:

- funding for the universal 15 hours entitlement for three and four year olds;

- funding for the additional 15 hours entitlement for three and four year old children of eligible working parents;
- funding for the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged two year olds;
- funding for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP);
- funding for the Disability Access Fund (DAF);
- supplementary funding for Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS).

The allocations are calculated on a formulaic basis and include Lancashire's share of an additional £44m nationally for early years education in 2021/22.

This additional funding translates into an additional 6p per hour for three and four year olds from April 2021, and 8p per hour for two year olds.

Other factors in the formula remain unchanged from 2020/21:

- Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) – 53p per eligible child per hour;
- Disability Access Fund (DAF) - £615 per eligible child per year.

The continuation of supplementary funding for Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) was also confirmed for 2021/22. Government announcements did include information to indicate that the supplementary funding for Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) allocations for September 2021 to March 2022 are conditional and they may be subject to change. Local authorities were advised to therefore treat them as unconfirmed. The announcements reiterated the Government's commitment to the long-term funding of maintained nursery schools and indicated more information would be provided about this in early 2021.

These factors provide a total Early Years Block allocation for Lancashire for 2021/22 of £82,471,546.

Lancashire's Early Years funding is circa £2m higher than the equivalent 2020/21 allocation, due to the increased hourly funding rates for two, three and four year olds.

It should be noted that the 2021/22 early years block allocations are initial, and based on Schools, Early Years and Alternative Provision censuses data from January 2020. These allocations will be updated based on January 2021 and January 2022 census data.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) (£6.766m)

The Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) is to fund central functions that Local Authority's carry out on behalf of pupils in state-funded maintained schools and academies in England.

The Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) is split into funding for historic commitments and funding for ongoing responsibilities. The ongoing responsibilities element is based on a formula, with unit values being increased by 4% for 2021/22. The uplift includes an element of additional funding for the teachers pay and pensions relating to centrally employed teachers.

The Historic Commitments element of the allocation has been reduced by 20% compared to 2020/21, as the Department for Education indicate that they will continue to 'unwind' historic commitments over time.

The total Lancashire's Central Schools Services Block allocation for 2021/22 is £6,765,814. This is over £0.3m higher than 2021/22, mainly relating to higher funding rate, the uplift for teachers pay and pensions and higher pupil numbers.

In Year Adjustments

The DSG allocation notified is prior to in year adjustments for:

- Academies recoupment from the schools block;
- Deductions for high needs places in academies and non-maintained special schools;
- Post 16 places;
- Deduction for national copyright licences;
- Updates to the funding for three and four year olds;
- Updates to the funding two year olds;
- Updates to the early years supplementary funding for maintained nursery school;
- Updates to the early years pupil premium;
- Updates to early years Disability Access Fund.

Forecast total DSG income for 2021/22

The Lancashire DSG allocations for 2021/22 across the 4 funding blocks are shown below:

<u>Forecast DSG Income</u>	£m's
Schools Block	849.944
High Needs Block	151.033
Early Years Block	82.472
Central Schools Services Block	6.766
Gross Total forecast DSG Income	1,090.214
Total deductions for direct high needs payments made by the ESFA	-8.402
Net Total forecast DSG Income	1,081.812

SCHOOLS BUDGET 2021/22

The latest Individual School Budgets (ISB) across all phases has been constructed using the final datasets made available from the Department for Education and our latest local Early Years and High Needs data.

This Schools Budget estimate has been calculated following the outcome of consultations with schools and early years providers and discussions with the Schools Forum.

Budget Summary

The table below summarises the budgets to be allocated from each of the DSG funding blocks

Forecast DSG Expenditure	£m's
Schools Block	847.944
High Needs Block	151.033
Early Years Block	84.472
Central Schools Services Block	6.766
Total deductions for direct high needs payments made by the ESFA	-8.402
Total forecast DSG Expenditure	1,081.812

Further details about each block are provided below.

Schools Block (£847.944m)

Following a consultation with schools and the Schools Forum as part of the 2018/19 Schools Budget setting cycle, it was agreed to use the Government's National Funding Formula (NFF) methodology as the local Lancashire funding model.

The National Funding Formula methodology will continue to apply in 2021/22 for calculating allocations to Lancashire schools, and will incorporate the changes to the formula introduced nationally that are set out in the main report. This provides for a guaranteed 2% per pupil increase for all schools and academies in 2021/22.

As supported by responses from schools in a consultation held in the autumn term 2020, the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) has been included in the formula at +2% and there is no cap on funding gains.

A 2021/22 growth fund requirement, which is used to support Local Authority initiated school expansions, of circa £2m has been included for 2021/22.

The calculation reveals a 2021/22 Schools Block expenditure requirement of £847.944.

The recent school consultation also provided support for the transfer of any Schools Block headroom that may be available to help support pressures in the Early Years block.

£2m represents 0.26% of the Schools Block, prior to the inclusion of the teachers pay and pensions grant uplifts, so is below 0.5% level requiring transfers to be approved by the Secretary of State and a decision can therefore be approved by the Forum;

Responses will be presented to Forum as one of their decisions on 12 January 2021

The headroom figure is generated from Lancashire's 2021/22 Growth Fund allocation from Government, less our local estimate of the growth requirement from April 2021.

High Needs Block

The High Needs Block expenditure for 2021/22 is estimated in the table below:

	Place funding £m	Top-up funding £m
Delegated to Schools	32.234	71.755
FE Colleges		7.000
HNB costs on a commissioned basis		31.305
Total deductions for direct high needs payments made by the Education and Skills Funding Agency		8.402
Additional High Needs places to be paid direct by Education and Skills Funding Agency		0.337
Total	32.234	118.799

The total forecast High Needs Block expenditure in 2021/22 is some £151.033m.

This forecast expenditure includes an estimate of the considerable cost and demand led pressures facing the block in 2021/22.

Proposals also build in a 2% increase to the level for the school specific factor rates in special schools and pupil referral units and to the Weighted Pupil Number (WPN) values supporting all high needs pupils. These proposals provide a similar level of increase to that in the Schools Block national funding formula, which guarantees 2% more pupil-led funding per pupil than in 2020/21.

The circa £8.4m of deductions in the Dedicated Schools Grant notifications have been budgeted here, as this relates to direct high needs payments made by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

An extra £0.337m worth of deductions has also been included, for additional high needs places that have now been commissioned by the county council at establishments that are directly paid by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Despite considerable pressure on the high need block funding envelope, a balanced budget position has been forecast for 2021/22 and the county council will continue to work on initiatives that ensure that the best use is being made of the High Needs

resources available and to minimise as far as possible the future years forecasted overspends.

Early Years Block

The Early Years Block expenditure for 2021/22 is estimated in the table below:

	2 year olds £m	3&4 year olds £m
Early Years Block 3/4 year olds		73.177
Early Years Block 2 year olds	9.729	
Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)		0.752
Early Years Disability Access Fund (DAF)		0.314
SEN Inclusion Fund		0.500
Total	9.729	74.743

The total forecast Early Years Block expenditure in 2021/22 is some £84.472m.

Government announcements on 17 December 2020 indicated that the additional early years funding for 2021/22 translated into an extra 6p per hour for three and four year olds from April 2021, and 8p per hour for two year olds. These increased values have been included in the budget forecasts for 2021/22

Other factors in the national early years formula remain unchanged from 2020/21 and have also been included in budget forecast:

- Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) – 53p per eligible child per hour;
- Disability Access Fund (DAF) - £615 per eligible child per year.

Maintained Nursery School Supplementary Funding continues to be provided in 2021/22 and is included in the budget figures for 3&4 year olds above. However, the government announcements emphasise that the maintained nursery school supplementary funding allocations for September 2021 to March 2022 are 'conditional' and may be subject to change. Local authorities are advised to treat them as unconfirmed. The DfE say more information about this will be provided in early 2021 but the government's commitment to the long-term funding of maintained nursery schools is unchanged.

The budget forecasts also build in a £2m transfer of headroom from the Schools Block to the Early Years block, which will need to be confirmed by the Schools Forum, as part of their budget decisions on 12 January 2021. This funding transfer allows a local increase of 8p per hour for the 3&4 year old base rates and a higher level of SEN Inclusion Fund, first supported by a Schools Block transfer in 2020/21, to continue into 2021/22.

It must be emphasised that the transfer of funding from Schools Block headroom cannot be guaranteed for future years.

Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)

The estimated Central Schools Services Block expenditure in 2021/22 is £6.766m.

The budget takes account of the Department for Education's decision to reduce the Historic Commitments element of the budget by 20% from April 2021, as part of their intention to cease all 'historic' funding over time.

In consultation with the Schools Forum, Lancashire has already significantly reduced the historic commitments expenditure, and further reductions are included in the forecast expenditure for 2021/22. However, in order to protect some combined budget contributions that help support valued services to schools, the historic commitments element is forecast to be overspend in 2021/22, being partially supported from the ongoing responsibilities element, in order to produce a balanced position for the Central Schools Services Block overall.

Careful consideration will be needed around the Central Schools Services Block in future years, as DfE implement further reductions in the Historic Commitments budget.

Calculation of the final 2021/22 funding position

	£m's
Total forecast DSG Income 2021/22	1,081.812
Total Forecast DSG Allocations 2021/22	1,081.812

These Schools Budget proposal forecast a balanced budget position for 2021/22.

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 7b

Title: Consultation on the Possible Schools Block Transfer to the Early Years Block 2021/22

Executive Summary

This report provides information relating to the 2021/22 Schools Block Transfer consultation analysis and comments.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report, and the consultation analysis and comments;**
- b) Bear this information in mind when formal decisions about the Schools Block transfer are being taken.**

Background

The consultation on the possible 2021/22 Schools Block Transfer of headroom to the Early Years Block closed on 11 December 2020 and an analysis of responses and a full set of comments are provided. A copy of the consultation document is included in the summary report from the Schools Block Working Group.

A total of 79 responses were received from schools.

Analysis

Question: Do you agree that any headroom available in the Schools Block once the NFF methodology has been implemented in full should be transferred to support pressures in the Early Years Block in 2021/22?			
Yes	No	Not Sure	Total responses
72	3	4	79
91%	4%	5%	100%

Comments

(The comments have been anonymised, where they mentioned specific schools by name).

I'm not sure I fully understand this, but does this mean that the school's block funding is subsidising early years? Whilst I fully understand the pressures on early years provision, there are considerable pressures on all schools, especially those with sixth forms. I would be interested in getting a better understanding of this issue.

The language gap of children entering the EYFS is continually growing. I feel this is due to the modern world not allowing time for our children. The pressures of work, finances and the peer-pressure of using consoles etc. are all adding to less time being spent with our children meaning they are having less time to interact with people and becoming increasingly reluctant to develop their communication and language skills.

In principle support the proposals but would also consider an option to split any headroom to also support other blocks in difficulty or deficit such as High Needs to offer some balance but understand this could mean that neither block are supported to the degree they need to be and that High Needs do have a proposed strategy that aims to reduce deficit going forward, whereas there is little manoeuvrability within early years.

Nursery Schools are under enormous pressure financially and do not get the same funding as Secondary/Primary/Infant Schools. As Chair I accept this but feel that even financially well run Nursery Schools need any extra funding that is available so see them through this terrible Pandemic. Many of the Nursery Schools are Outstanding according to Ofsted and prepare children for their continuing Educational journey into Primary then Secondary schools.

I've gone with Not Sure as I don't know if all the headroom should go in this direction as there are other pressures such as SEND/AP and such that also need additional funds.

Early Years Providers across all sectors are under increasing financial pressure. The County Council have always been very supportive of the sector and I welcome this proposal. However, we need to continue to lobby Government to ensure fair funding for the Early Years sector which is unsustainable in the current climate.

As headteacher of two maintained nursery schools, more than in previous years, we have struggled to provide sufficient staffing levels to support SEN children since COVID pandemic began. For both schools, these numbers are much higher than ever before, with no financial assistance due to blockages in the children's assessment & referral system. In recent weeks, we have also received several new children who have transferred from PVI's where their (SEN) needs were not being met. As maintained nurseries, we have never turned any children away and the cost of providing for these children should be reflected in the allocation of funds.

Instigation and implementation of SEND policies and procedures as children enter the education system a notable expense for early years settings. Current levels of funding for SEND in early years are proving insufficient to meet current needs and the backlog in referral and support process caused by Covid crisis in 2020 would suggest that without additional funding many Children identified with SEND in early years settings will be unprepared or unable to continue into suitable school placements in September 2021.

In addition to the generally low Early Years Block Funding mentioned in the proposal, xxxx Nursery School (and doubtless other Maintained Nursery Schools) has suffered substantial extra costs due to the need to attempt to provide for the increased numbers of SEN children during the Covid pandemic and new SEN children in this new term. Because of the blockages in the children's assessment & referral system due to Covid19, there has as yet been no financial provision established for these children. As a Maintained Nursery School, xxxx is committed to not turning such children away, but the pressure on school finances of providing for their needs is considerable.

Many parents are currently working from home or have lost their jobs and are not taking up the number of places / hours that they did last year and the year before. The extended 15 hours available has taken a big hit in attendance for these reasons. Also the 15 universal hours take up is down as some anxious parents want to keep their children at home with them.

If we do not support Maintained Nurseries NOW, they will be an enormous loss, especially to all deprived areas!

The impact in investing the early years cannot be underestimated in supporting vulnerable children to become school ready and therefore give them the best opportunity to improve life chances.

Yes - So long as the implementation of the NFF, including the increased MPF & MFG, can still be made in full.

Any help for struggling nurseries is welcome

Item 7d SCHOOLS BUDGET 2021/22

SPECIFIC APPROVALS NEEDED FROM THE SCHOOLS FORUM

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations require certain proposals by the Local Authority relating to the Schools Budget to be approved by the Schools Forum. .

An indication of the specific proposals that have previously been considered and approved by the Forum is included together with proposals now put forward that require approval.

Function	LA proposals 2021/22	Proposed Expenditure: 2021/22 £m
Consultation on Formula Changes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As required by DfE, the HNB working group were consulted on the best way to incorporate the former teachers pay and teachers pensions grants in the special school and AP formulae 	Proposals look to incorporate the former teachers pay and teachers pensions grants in the HNB formulae by an increase to the school specific factor. A school specific factor is available in both the special school and PRU formulae and an additional allocation of £660 per pupil will be included in both for 2021/22, included as a separate line on budget statements, so that it is transparent and easily identifiable.	2.598
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to requests from PRU representatives, proposals have been developed to use WPN values in the AP funding formula, rather than AWPU values 	Proposals look to incorporate the WPN value at Band E2 (1 WPN) in the secondary PRU formula rather than the average of the secondary AWPU value, and at 2/3 the WPN value (at Band E2) for primary PRUs, rather than the primary AWPU. Both phases receive a circa £30 per pupil increase using this formula	0.013

De-delegation for mainstream schools	LA proposals for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools in financial difficulty; • Museum service (primary only); • Staff Costs Public duties/Suspensions; • Primary Inclusion Hubs Approved by the Schools Forum on 20 October 2020	3.456
Movement of up to headroom from the schools block to other blocks	Consultation responses are provided in the Forum papers, and in accordance with responses and recommendations from the Schools Block, proposals to transfer headroom from Schools Block to the Early Years are built into the Schools Budget 2021/22.	2.000
Contracts (where the LA is entering a contract to be funded from the schools budget)	No Proposals at this time	
Financial issues relating to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding 	Proposals contained in the High Needs Block Working Group recommendations report to the Forum and the Forum budget papers	98.839
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements for use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding 	Proposals contained in the High Needs Block Working Group recommendations report to the Forum and the Forum budget papers	12.094
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrangements for early years provision 	Proposals contained in the Early Years Block Working Group report to the Forum and the Forum budget papers	84.471

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> administration arrangements for the allocation of central government grants 	No Proposals at this time beyond passporting DfE allocations to schools	
Minimum funding guarantee (MFG)	Consultation responses on MFG reported to Forum on 20 October 2020 and recommended that the level of MFG to be used in the Lancashire funding formula for 2021/22 be set at +2.0%.	
General Duties for maintained schools Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for maintained schools	No Proposals at this time	
Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> funding for significant pre-16 pupil growth, including new schools set up to meet basic need, whether maintained or academy 	<p>Policy previously agreed by the Schools Forum. Proposal to increase the growth fund unit values in line with increased NFF Minimum Pupil Funding levels for 2021/22, using the higher rate that incorporates previous teachers pay and pensions grants</p> <p>Final budget proposals are contained in the Schools Budget 2021/22 report</p>	1.797
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> funding for good or outstanding schools with falling rolls where growth in pupil numbers is expected within three years 	No Proposals at this time	-
Central spend on:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> early years block provision funding to enable all schools to meet the infant class size requirement 	No Proposals at this time	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> back-pay for equal pay claims 	No Proposals at this time	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> remission of boarding fees at maintained schools and academies 	No Proposals at this time	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils 	No Proposals at this time	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> admissions 	Final budget proposals are contained in the Schools Budget 2021/22 report	1.400
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> servicing of schools forum 	Final budget proposals are contained in the Schools Budget 2021/22 report	0.188
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution to responsibilities that local authorities hold for all schools 	No Proposals at this time	
Central spend on:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> capital expenditure funded from revenue: projects must have been planned and decided on prior to April 2013 so no new projects can be charged 	No Proposals at this time	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contribution to combined budgets: this is where the schools forum agreed prior to April 2013 a contribution from the schools budget to services which would otherwise be funded from other sources 	Final combined budget proposals are contained in the Schools Budget 2021/22 report	0.350
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing termination of employment costs (costs for specific individuals must have been approved prior to April 2013 so no new redundancy costs can be charged) 	No Proposals at this time	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prudential borrowing costs – the commitment must have been approved prior to April 2013 	Historic commitment ended in 2020/21	0.000

Central spend on:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high needs block provision 	2021/22 funding level presented as part of the Schools Budget setting proposals	31.305
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> central licences negotiated by the Secretary of State 	2021/22 funding level presented as part of the Schools Budget setting proposals	1.000
Carry forward a deficit on central expenditure to the next year to be funded from the schools budget	No Proposals at this time	
Any brought forward deficit on de-delegated services which is to be met by the overall schools budget.	No Proposals at this time	

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM
Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 8

Title: Recommendations of the Schools Block Working Group

Appendix A refers

Executive Summary

On 8 December 2020, the Schools Block Working Group considered a number of reports, including:

- School Block Funding 2021/22 and local modelling and numbers;
- Consultation on the Possible Schools Block Transfer to the Early Years Block;
- School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme;
- Schools Expansion Funding 2021/22;
- Covid workforce fund to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges;
- Update on exceptional cost claim related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March to July 2020;
- The Cost of a New School;
- COVID-19 Winter Grant,

A summary of the information presented and the Working Group's recommendations are provided in this report.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) **Note the report from the Schools Block Working Group held on 8 December 2021;**
- b) **Ratify the Working Group's recommendations.**

Background

On 8 December 2021, the Schools Block Working Group considered a number of reports. A summary of the information presented and the Working Group's recommendations are provided below.

1. School Block Funding 2021/22 and local modelling and numbers

Reports to the 22 September 2020 working group provided information related to the Government's school funding announcements for 2021/22.

Publication of final 2020/21 DSG allocations will not be available until later in December 2020, together with a final APT containing October 2020 census-based pupil data and factors.

The DfE have published an early version of the APT for modelling purposes and the county council has obtained some local data from the October 2020 school census.

For Schools Block purposes the local census data indicates that there were a total of 164,710 pupils in Lancashire primary and secondary schools and academies at October 2020. This is an increase of 1,001 compared to October 2019, and includes 1,216 extra pupils in the secondary phase, slightly offset by a reduction of 215 pupils in the primary sector.

Local census data will be the subject of further cleansing and finalisation by the DfE before the December APT release, so figures may still vary at the margins.

The extra circa 1,000 pupils will generate further DSG income for the county when final allocations are announced, and will be additional to the extra funding generated by increases in core funding levels from April 2021.

Even though there will be general increases in the level of funding in 2021/22, it must be remembered that Individual School Budget (ISB) allocations can vary considerably from year to year based on pupil numbers at individual schools.

Initial analysis of NOR changes at school level from the October 2020 census shows the following maximum losses in actual pupil and % terms, by sector:

Secondary Max Loss	60 pupils
Primary Max Loss	28 pupils
Secondary Max % Loss	6%
Primary Max % Loss	45%

There are also some significant increases at school level, as shown below:

Secondary Max Gain	141 pupils
Primary Max Gain	32 pupils
Secondary Max % Gain	29%
Primary Max % Gain	49%

Members discussed the pupil number trends in Lancashire and future projections utilised by the school place planning team. It was noted that proposals were being developed for a possible new primary school in the Clitheroe area.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report.**

2. Consultation on the Possible Schools Block Transfer to the Early Years Block

Now that provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2021/22 have been made available and we have initial pupil data from the October 2020 school census, the county council has been able to model the Schools Block budget from April 2021.

Our initial estimates suggest that the implementation of the National School Funding Formula (NFF) methodology in Lancashire, including the increased minimum pupil funding (MPF) levels and the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) set at positive +2% is affordable as the local funding formula. Modelling indicates that there could still be circa £2m of headroom available in 2021/22. The majority of this headroom is generated from Lancashire's growth fund allocation, which is calculated outside the NFF methodology.

The county council has therefore issued a consultation with the schools seeking views on a possible transfer of headroom only, from the Schools Block to be used in the Early Years Block. The consultation was issued via the Schools Portal on 1 December 2020, and set out the rationale for the proposal. The consultation closes on 11 December 2020.

A copy of the consultation document was provided for the Working Group, and is provided at Appendix A to this report.

Members discussed the proposal and noted that school consultation responses will be shared with Forum in January, when final DSG allocations would also be known.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Expressed support for the proposed Schools Block transfer to Early Years Block;**
- c) Noted that final decisions would be taken by the Forum in January when school consultation responses and final DSG allocations would be available.**

3. School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme

Each year, reports are presented to the Forum about the arrangements for the School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme. This report provided information around scheme arrangements in 2020/21 and proposals for 2021/22

2019/20 Outturn Position

The 2019/20 outturn report that the Scheme reserve at 31 March 2020 was at £1.037m, following an in-year deficit of £0.133m. The deficit was attributable to the support staff element of the scheme and partially offset by a surplus on the teaching staff element.

The Forum have previously recommended that the scheme should aim to retain a reserve of £1.25m to mitigate against the risk of an exceptionally high claims year.

2020/21 Scheme Arrangements

The scheme arrangements agreed with the Forum for 2020/21 looked to increase premiums and reimbursement rates to take account of the relevant teaching and support staff pay increases and the revised salary pay spine for support staff.

Following finalisation of the supply scheme arrangements with the Forum in January 2020 individual offers were issued to schools and academies for consideration. It was noted that 13 fewer schools joined the scheme in 2020/2 compared to 2019/20.

It was also noted that during the 2020/21 scheme year, the Forum have received reports and considered proposals to amend the scheme using the urgent business procedure in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has including extending cover to support COVID related self-isolation absences, subject to certain conditions, and covering 'shielding' absences for certain periods of time. A further update of the scheme rules has been issued since the last Forum meeting, to cover the period of the second national lockdown from 5 November 2020 to 2 December 2020. The rule changes for this period related to staff who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) identified through a letter from the NHS or from GPs. Following discussions with the Forum Chair, it was judged that this updated did not need to seek prior approval of the Forum, as it was in keeping with the recommendations expressed by members at the 20 October 2020 Forum meeting that the shielding rules within the scheme should be kept under review in the light of changing government guidance.

2021/22 Scheme Proposals

The pandemic has required the scheme rules to be reviewed and changed on a number of occasions in 2020/21 and it is expected that the year end cost burden on the scheme will be increased from what might have been expected in a 'normal' year. The updated operation of the scheme has tried to strike a balance between supporting schools with additional costs incurred during the pandemic and ensuring the scheme reserve is not exhausted, leading to significant increases in premiums for school members in future years.

However, the 2021/22 offer letter needs to be issued to schools in January 2021, which is several months in advance of the 2020/21 year end when the final position on the scheme finances will be known.

At the time of writing, positive news on COVID vaccinations has been announced, but the roll-out and effectiveness of this development is not yet clear and it remains likely that COVID will have implications for supply scheme costs well into 2021/22.

There was already an intention to increase the premiums for support staff cover in response to the continuing overspends on this element of the scheme.

It is also be usual practice to increase teaching and support staff premiums annually so that reimbursement rates can also increase in line with likely pay rises for the different categories of staff. Recent announcement by the Chancellor have introduced a public sector pay freeze, excluding frontline NHS workers and those earning less than £24,000.

All these factors combined make planning for 2021/22 extremely difficult. However, some proposals were outlined for consideration by the working group.

Operation of the Scheme

Changes to the operation of the scheme could include the amendments agreed by the Forum during 2020/21, including:

- Self-isolation
Staff who are self isolating due to COVID-19 symptoms or as a result of test and trace will continue to be covered by the scheme, where the school is incurring additional costs by covering the absence as if staff were off ill, and subject to the normal scheme rules, for example, the waiting periods chosen by the school and subject to the school remaining open and scheme reimbursement rates.
- In year changes to the level of cover provided will be suspended in 2021/22 so that the scheme reserve can be protected in order to cope with the demands caused by the pandemic.
- Ongoing government guidance for workers who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) is that that they no longer needed to shield. Staff in Lancashire schools can return to work as long as the workplace is COVID secure and supply cover is not therefore supported by the scheme in 2021/22. However, the scheme will respond in year to any changes to government/LCC Schools HR advice in respect of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) staff. (For example, as happened during the second national restrictions from 05/11/20 to 02/12/20).

No other changes are proposed to the Scheme SLA.

Scheme Premiums

In order to mitigate against the risk to the scheme reserve due to COVID related pressures, allow for some small increases in the relevant reimbursement rates and respond to the ongoing overspend on the support staff element of the scheme, the following level of increases to premiums are proposed for 2021/22:

- Teaching staff element:+6%
- Support staff element :+10%

If need be, premiums can continue to increase at a level marginally above inflation over future years in order to reinstate the recommended level of scheme reserve (£1.25m), without the need for a significant premium increase in a single year. Members are also reminded that if the scheme reserve exceeds the level recommended by Forum at any given year end, then the surplus funding is returned to scheme members.

Reimbursement rates

It is proposed the reimbursement rates in the teaching staff scheme for 2021/22 will be held at 2020/21 levels, in line with the Chancellor's decision to freeze public sector pay.

For the support staff scheme, reimbursements are aligned to estimated actual grades of staff in the School Financial Services Budget Preparation Guidance. This will recognise the pay freeze for staff on higher grades and incorporate the pay rises

for staff on less than £24,000 per annum, who will receive a minimum of a £250 increase.

Service Offer to Schools

Once scheme arrangements and charging/reimbursement rates are finalised by the Forum in January 2021, a formal individualised 2021/22 scheme offer will be issued to all schools and academies.

The Working Group

- a) **Noted the report;**
- b) **Supported the proposed 2021/22 School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme arrangements.**

4. Schools Expansion Funding 2021/22

The School Expansion: Policy for Additional Revenue Funding provides support for basic need growth commissioned by the LA. This policy was originally approved by the Schools Forum on 14 January 2014 and introduced from 1 April 2014. Subsequent amendments to the policy have been agreed since that date.

The DSG calculation Lancashire received from DfE includes an element for Growth Funding, which is used to resource the expansion policy.

The policy calculates the support for schools or academies at the relevant Minimum Pupil Funding (MPF) rate contained in the National Funding Formula (NFF) and each year as part of the budget setting process, the Forum are asked to confirm that the expansion rate payable is increased in line with the relevant MPF for that year.

For 2021/22, DfE have published 2 MPF rates per phase.

DfE announcement have indicated that 2021/22 minimum pupil funding (MPF) levels for primary and secondary schools are:

- The primary schools, the MPF level will be £4,000 per pupil in 2021/22 compared to £3,750 per pupil in 2020/21.
- For secondary schools, the MPF level will be £5,150 per pupil from 2021/22, compared to £5,000 per pupil in 2020/21;

However, DfE have announced that MPF levels have been increased further from April 2021 to reflect funding from the teachers' pay grant and the teachers' pension employer contribution grant, including the supplementary fund, which has been added to schools' NFF allocations from 2021/22. MPF levels will therefore receive an additional £180 and £265 per pupil respectively to cover additional teachers' pay and pension costs previously funded through the separate grants. This provides the following enhanced MPF levels in 2021/22:

- £4,180 per pupil for primary schools;
- £5,415 per pupil for secondary schools.

The Working Group considered level of MPF should be used in the 2021/22 Expansion Funding Policy for future additional expansions that the authority may request of schools and

supported the use of the higher levels, incorporating pay and pensions uplifts as the level most reflective of the additional costs being borne by schools for extra pupils.

The Working Group:

- a) **Noted the report;**
- b) **Supported the use of the higher MPF levels in the 2021/22 School Expansion Funding Policy, incorporating pay and pensions uplifts as the level most reflective of the additional costs being borne by schools for extra pupils**

5. Covid workforce fund to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges

On 27 November 2020, the DfE announced new funding to support schools and colleges during Covid pandemic. The Covid workforce fund is to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges.

Schools and colleges facing the greatest combined staffing and funding pressures will be able to claim via a new short-term Covid workforce fund, as part of the government's national priority of keeping education settings open.

The DfE announced the fund which will be backdated to 01 November 2020 and cover the current half term. It is designed for schools and colleges facing significant funding pressure, and will cover the costs of high levels of staff absences over a minimum threshold, to help ensure schools and colleges can remain open.

Schools and colleges will be able to reclaim costs incurred over the course of the current half term, if they meet the following conditions:

- **Financial:** Schools will first need to use any existing financial reserves, as we would typically expect when facing unforeseen costs. They will be eligible for this additional funding once they have used these down to a level at 4% of the annual income. Colleges' eligibility will be based on their cash position set out in the November financial return;
- **Absence rates:** Mainstream schools and colleges must be experiencing a short-term teacher absence rate at or above 20%, and/or a lower long-term teacher absence rate at or above 10% - costs can only be claimed when incurred above this rate;
- **Absence rates:** Special schools and Alternative Provision schools must be experiencing a short-term teacher absence rate at or above 15%, and/or a lower long-term teacher absence rate at or above 10%, to be eligible - costs can only be claimed when incurred above this rate.

Guidance on the claims process will be published by DfE shortly so schools and further education and sixth form colleges have confidence in the costs they can incur and be eligible to reclaim.

Members discussed the possible crossover with the supply scheme claims that could be made by schools and it was noted that the thresholds within the DfE scheme would mean that individual claims for staff absences would not be eligible to claim.

The Working Group

- a) **Noted the report.**

6. Update on exceptional cost claim related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March to July 2020

DfE have now assessed all claims for costs outside of the three eligible categories and have determined there are no new categories of extraordinary costs that they are able to reimburse. They acknowledge that this represents a disappointing outcome for many schools and apologised that it has taken longer than they would have hoped to notify schools, which was due to the significant number of claims received taking longer than anticipated to assess.

As previously announced, there will be a second claims window which will cover any unclaimed eligible costs for the period March to July and free school meal support for the summer holidays for costs outside of the COVID Summer Food Fund:

This will launch in early December, along with details on how to make a claim, and will remain open until 22 December.

There will be no opportunity to submit further claims after that date.

It was noted that the information about the second claims window was being included in the regular covid bulletin to schools and the subject of a specific posting on the schools portal.

The Working Group:

a) Noted the report.

7. The Cost of a New School

During the earlier paper about pupil numbers in 2021/22, information had been shared that School Planning team analysis of future pupil number forecasts.

A verbal update was provided about the possibility of new school provision being required in certain areas to meet this demand, and the revenue funding implications associated with this.

As part of the duty to provide enough pupil places for Lancashire children, the county council is proposing to start the process of commissioning a new primary school in Clitheroe. The school would be commissioned to provide 210 places which would accommodate rising pupil numbers as a result of housing development in the area. The new school would be a 'free school' (not maintained by the local authority) and would be developed by following the DfE guidance on free school presumption. The school was proposed to open from September 2023.

A period of informal consultation has begun before the commissioning process starts. The commissioning process involves inviting sponsors to submit their expressions of interest to sponsor (run) the school.

The building for the new school would be provided by the county council's basic need capital pot and partly funded through contributions from a housing development contribution, secured in a Section 106 agreement.

This information was shared with the group, as the DfE guidance indicates that, in addition to providing the site for the new school and meeting the associated capital costs, the LA is also responsible for meeting the revenue costs of the new provision, including:

- the per-pupil revenue funding (which the ESFA recoups from the local authority and pays directly to the school);
- all funding for pre-opening development costs and post-opening funding required to address diseconomies of scale as the school builds up to capacity.

Provision for the pre-opening costs would need to come from the growth fund and details will need to be included in a specification which is detailed enough to enable proposers to understand the needs of the LA and submit the strongest proposal possible. Therefore information would need to be finalised for the next stage of the commissioning process.

Members discussed the process of determining pupil number forecasts and the involvement of local schools in potentially meeting this need, possibly by expanding existing provision. Other potential areas of growth were also discussed, for example north Preston, and it was confirmed that the availability of existing provision in surrounding areas would be considered as part of any deliberations about meeting demand.

The Working Group:

- a) **Noted the information.**

8. Covid Winter Grant Scheme (FSM during Christmas holiday period)

Members enquired if there was any information available from the county council about the Covid Winter Grant Scheme.

Information was confirmed that the government announced a package of extra targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period.

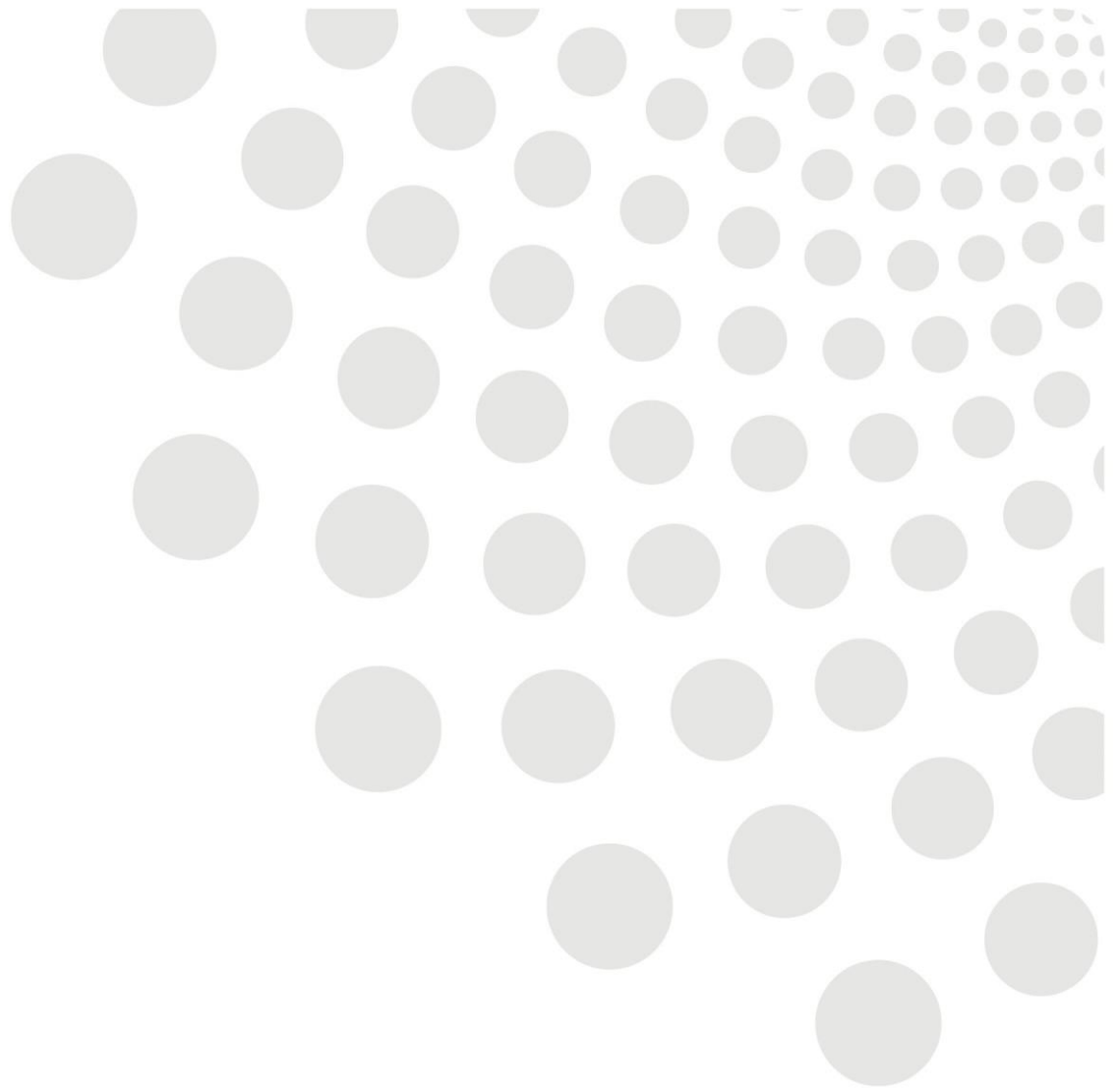
The COVID Winter Grant Scheme, which is to be made available in December 2020, will see new funding issued to LAs, totalling £170 million nationally, to support those most in need across England with the cost of food, energy and water bills and other associated costs.

It was noted that the grant scheme included provision of FSM during holiday periods, but that this was just one aspect of a broader range of considerations within the grant scheme expectations. The funding is intended to provide direct assistance to vulnerable households and families with children that are particularly affected by the pandemic. This will include families that normally receive benefit related free school meals during term time.

The county council is in the process of determining the arrangements for Lancashire and is aware timescales are tight for involving schools in the how the FSM element of the scheme and agreeing how it will operate and Schools Finance officers had already been pressuring the county council to issue urgent guidance to schools.

The Working Group:

- a) **Noted the information.**



Consultation on the Possible Schools Block Transfer to the Early Years Block in 2021/22

Proposal to transfer headroom from the Schools Block to be used in the Early Years Block in 2021/22

For the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years, a transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block has been agreed as part of the budget setting process, following consultation with schools. This transfer has helped to mitigate the overspend in HNB expenditure, as demand and cost led pressures have continued to rise.

In 2021/22, another transfer from Schools Block was supported by schools and the Schools Forum, this time to assist the cost pressures in the Early Years Block.

Now that provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocations for 2021/22 have been made available and we have initial pupil data from the October 2020 school census, the county council has been able to model the Schools Block budget from April 2021.

Our initial estimates suggest that the implementation of the National School Funding Formula (NFF) methodology in Lancashire, including the increased minimum pupil funding (MPF) levels and the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) set at positive +2% is affordable as the local funding formula. Modelling indicates that there could still be circa £2m of headroom available in 2021/22.

The majority of this headroom is generated from Lancashire's growth fund allocation, which is calculated outside the NFF methodology.

Forecasts suggest that the financial pressures remain most significant on the Early Years Block in 2021/22:

- The Early Years Block has not benefited from the over £14 billion of increased allocations that are being made available from the government covering the Schools Block and High Needs Block in the three years from 2020/21.
- Lancashire receives the lowest level of allocation nationally from the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF), along with around a third of LAs.
- The level of Early Years Block funding has been cash flat for a number of years, or has been at a below inflation level, but costs continue to rise, particularly around pay, with increases in the National Living Wage.
- Using 2018 data, National nursery associations calculated that there was a shortfall in 30 hour funding of £2,166 per annum per place, which equates to £1.90 per hour. We know that many Lancashire providers are very concerned about their future viability.

Recent announcements by the Chancellor have indicated that an additional £44 million nationally will be available for early years education in 2021/22. This increase represents an uplift of circa 1.2 %, which will again be below inflationary pressures on the sector.

The county council is therefore proposing to transfer any available headroom to support ongoing pressures in the Early Years Blocks.

Question: Do you agree that any headroom available in the Schools Block, once the NFF methodology has been implemented in full, should be transferred to support pressures in the Early Years Block in 2021/22?

- **Yes;**
- **No;**
- **Not sure.**

It must be emphasised that a conclusive position on headroom can only be modelled after receipt of final DSG allocations in mid December 2020. If the final modelling outcomes were vastly different from those based on the provisional data it may be necessary for an additional consultation to take place during a short window in early January 2021.

Any decision taken about a Schools Block transfer would only relate to 2021/22 and a further consultation would be held if a similar proposal was being suggested for 2022/23.

Your Views

Please let us know your views on the proposals that any headroom available in the Schools Block, once the NFF methodology has been implemented in full, should be transferred to support pressures in the Early Years Block in 2021/22, by completing the consultation questionnaire available [here](#), by **11 December 2020**.

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM
Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 9

Title: Recommendations of the High Needs Block Working Group

Appendix A refers

Executive Summary

On 3 December 2020, the High Needs Block Working Group considered a number of reports, including:

- SEND/AP Strategy Update;
- High Needs Block Commissioned Places 2021/22;
- Historic Commitments Combined Budget Funding 2021/22 (MASH);
- HNB Teachers Pay and Pensions Grant;
- School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme;
- High Needs Block Termly Redetermination Process;
- Exceptional cost claim related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March to July 2020;
- The Covid Workforce Fund.

A summary of the information presented and the Working Group's recommendations are provided in this report.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) **Note the report from the High Needs Block Working Group held on 3 December 2020;**
- b) **Ratify the Working Group's recommendations.**

Background

On 3 December 2020, the High Needs Block Working Group considered a number of reports. A summary of the information presented and the Working Group's recommendations are provided below.

1. SEND/AP Strategy Update

Dr Sally Richardson, Head of the Inclusion Service attended the working Group for this item.

It was noted that papers issued to the LCC cabinet on the SEND strategy and the AP strategy had been circulated to members after the last working group meeting.

Sally discussed key issues raised by the working group at previous meetings, including the drivers behind the increases in the Out County budget, including increased number of pupils needing placements and rises in the costs of provision. Information was provided about some of the strategies being deployed to control expenditure, which included the commissioning arrangements.

Central to the SEND strategy was the greater use of local provision and Sally also provided an update on the policy to develop SEN units at mainstream schools. It was noted that further correspondence had been issued to schools in November 2020, seeking additional school volunteers to host units, and provision was being taken forward with some primary schools that came forward in the initial expression of interest round.

The oversubscription of Lancashire special schools was also highlighted and it was noted that developments to expand Sir Tom Finney High and relocate Oswaldtwistle School were progressing.

The Group were also informed that as part of the OfSTED inspection follow up, the county council was working accessing some DfE consultancy support which was focusing identifying and sharing good practice around an inclusive approach in mainstream provision.

On AP, comment was made about the funding policy for PRUs compared to special schools, particularly for pupils with EHC Plans. It was also noted that issues needed to be viewed holistically and include Inclusion Hub Developments, or challenges facing early years for example.

Members noted the challenges identified and the strategies being implemented to tackle some of the key issues. All agreed that helping young people with additional needs in Lancashire was the primary objective and the Forum would consider funding implications that would support the various High Needs Block strategies going forward.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Agreed to consider any funding implications that would support the various High Needs Block strategies going forward.**

2. High Needs Block Commissioned Places 2021/22

The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations require that the Forum is consulted annually on the places to be commissioned by the local authority in different schools and other institutions, and on the arrangements for paying top-up funding.

This report provided an update about the proposed HNB places to be commissioned for 2021/22, including those place numbers submitted on the DfE on the annual place change notification submission. All the changes to commissioned places relate to the 2021/22 academic year.

High Needs Place Change Notification Process 2021/22

Each year the LA must submit a return to the DfE setting out the proposed changes to place numbers at certain types of institution, which are funded directly by the ESFA.

The 2021/22 High Needs Place Change Notification return for Lancashire was submitted by the deadline of 13 November 2020. The place change return included sections for:

- Special Academy Schools;
- FE Colleges;
- Mainstream Academy Schools - Post 16;
- Alternative Provision Academies
- Hospital Education Places.

The proposed 2021/22 commissioned places have been determined in consultation by authority services with the relevant providers.

Information about 2021/22 place proposals for institutions included on the return is provided in Appendix A.

Local Place Changes

In addition to those commissioned places that must be included on the DfE submission, the LA must commission other places locally.

Appendix A also includes 2021/22 commissioned place proposals for:

- Maintained Special Schools - Pre 16;
- Maintained Special Schools - Post 16;
- Alternative Provision;
- Maintained Mainstream Provision - SERF Units;
- Special Post 16 Institutions.

Commissioned Places at Special Schools and PRUs 2021/22

As part of the process agreed with the Schools Forum earlier this year, the county council brought forward the process for liaising with special schools and PRUs around indicative commission places for 2021/22 and proposed numbers were reported to the Working Group and Forum in September and October 2020.

It was noted that additional AP places may need to be commissioned during the year, for example at FE colleges. The number of such places for 2021/22 has yet to be determined and figures are not therefore included in the AP section of Appendix A.

Independent and Non-maintained special schools

Separate arrangements exist for commissioning places at independent and non-maintained special schools.

There are currently 413 pupils attending independent and non-maintained special schools in the 2020/21 academic year, compared to 368 at the same time a year earlier.

Fortnightly panels meet to consider these placements and places are commissioned for those pupils where places at independent and non-maintained special schools are agreed

The costs of these places will be dependent on the needs of the individual children. Members will be aware that there are significant pressures on the 'out-county' budget and that strategies are being implemented to ensure that more pupils are being supported in Lancashire schools going forward.

Arrangements for paying top-up funding to schools and other institutions.

Lancashire pupil related top up funding (pre and post 16) is currently calculated using Weighted Pupil Numbers (WPNs), which are used to fund the assessed need of each High Needs Pupil.

Top-up funding is re-determined up or down termly in line with the SEN counts in January, May and October.

School specific top-up funding will also be allocated to special schools for the total number of all pre and post 16 Lancashire pupils on the SEN count, to reflect different school related costs.

Similarly, the funding mechanism for AP provides a top-up based on the needs of individual pupils and also a Pupil Referral Unit Specific top-up.

Certain protections have been implemented in 2020/21, to mitigate the impact on budgets that would be affected by reduced numbers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the situation will be kept under review in 2021/22.

Funded terms

April - August	September - December	January - March
5/12	4/12	3/12

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Supported the HNB commissioned places set out in the report.**

3. Historic Commitments Combined Budget Funding 2021/22 (MASH)

Information on DfE School Funding announcements for 2021/22 included confirmation that the historic commitments element of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) will decrease by a further 20% from April 2021.

DfE announcements were clear that DSG Historic Commitments allocations will continue to reduce to zero across future years.

Initial modelling of the impact of this reduction in Lancashire suggests that we may be able to protect the existing levels of DSG 'combined budget' contributions for 2021/22, as follows:

- Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service - £200k
- MASH - £150k

This will be subject to Schools Forum approval in January 2021, as part of the Schools Budget setting process.

Information about the use of DSG funding for the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service was shared at the last meeting

This report provided information from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) giving a 2020 update.

School Forum currently fund two MASH education officers plus two education BSO's to enable information sharing with schools. The most successful Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) units around the country include education posts within them. Since December 2014 two grade nine workers Matt and Jenny have been in post and have established links with schools in Lancashire. Both workers are qualified teachers and have an understanding of the pressures that face safeguarding leads. The MASH posts are seen as critical to continued engagement, maintaining effective relationships with schools and developing pathways and working processes that benefit their pupils and their families.

The MASH posts are an all year round resource and provide support to all schools in Lancashire. The education posts have identified clear pathways for schools offering a consistent approach across the county. The details for the MASH education officers are on the school Portal, school safeguarding policy and are provided in DSL training.

The report also included information and data on

- Multi-agency working
- Quality Assurance of Education Referrals
- Direct Point of Contact
- School Safeguarding Advice Line (SSAL)
- Police Reports
- Encompass
- MASH Operations Board

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;**

- b) Agreed to bear the information provided in mind when setting the 2021/22 Schools Budget.**

4. HNB Teachers Pay and Pensions Grant

For 2021/22 the DfE have incorporated the teachers' pay grant (TPG) and teachers' pension employer contribution grant (TPECG) within the high needs national funding formula. The amounts in this formula factor will be updated in the DSG allocations, published in December 2020, based on the TPG, TPECG and supplementary fund amounts allocated in 2020/21, up to 31 March 2021.

The DfE expect that this funding will be passed onto special schools and PRUs and will update the DSG conditions of grant to reflect this requirement.

The county council has been considering how to incorporate this allocation in Lancashire special school and PRU budgets from April 2021 and is proposing to use the school specific factor. A school specific factor is available in both the special school and PRU formulae and an additional allocation of £660 per pupil will be included in both for 2021/22 to reflect the TPG and TPECG. This pay and pensions funding will be included as a separate line on budget statements, so that it is transparent and easily identifiable.

The school specific factor is deemed the best distribution method as it would provide an allocation to special schools and PRUs based on their pupil numbers.

Other options were discounted as they were seen to have disadvantages, including:

- A change to WPN rates would distribute funding across all schools including mainstream that are already receiving a TPG/TPECG uplift;
- An increase to top up funding would distort rates that are attributable to individual pupil needs;
- The £10,000 place funding is a nationally recognised figure that provides a demarcation for high needs resources and would be distorted if TPG/TPECG allocations were added.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Supported the proposed methodology for allocating Teachers' pay and employer contribution funding in 2021/22.**

5. School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme

Each year, reports are presented to the Forum about the arrangements for the School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme.

2019/20 Outturn Position

The 2019/20 outturn report that the Scheme reserve at 31 March 2020 was at £1.037m, following an in-year deficit of £0.133m. The deficit was attributable to the support staff element of the scheme and partially offset by a surplus on the teaching staff element.

The Forum have previously recommended that the scheme should aim to retain a reserve of £1.25m to mitigate against the risk of an exceptionally high claims year.

2020/21 Scheme Arrangements

The scheme arrangements agreed with the Forum for 2020/21 looked to increase premiums and reimbursement rates to take account of the relevant teaching and support staff pay increases and the revised salary pay spine for support staff.

Following finalisation of the supply scheme arrangements with the Forum in January 2020 individual offers were issued to schools and academies for consideration. It was noted that 13 fewer schools joined the scheme in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20.

It was also noted that during the 2020/21 scheme year, the Forum have received reports and considered proposals to amend the scheme using the urgent business procedure in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has including extending cover to support COVID related self-isolation absences, subject to certain conditions, and covering 'shielding' absences for certain periods of time. A further update of the scheme rules has been issued since the last Forum meeting, to cover the period of the second national lockdown from 5 November 2020 to 2 December 2020. The rule changes for this period related to staff who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) identified through a letter from the NHS or from GPs. Following discussions with the Forum Chair, it was judged that this updated did not need to seek prior approval of the Forum, as it was in keeping with the recommendations expressed by members at the 20 October 2020 Forum meeting that the shielding rules within the scheme should be kept under review in the light of changing government guidance.

2021/22 Scheme Proposals

The pandemic has required the scheme rules to be reviewed and changed on a number of occasions in 2020/21 and it is expected that the year end cost burden on the scheme will be increased from what might have been expected in a 'normal' year. The updated operation of the scheme has tried to strike a balance between supporting schools with additional costs incurred during the pandemic and ensuring the scheme reserve is not exhausted, leading to significant increases in premiums for school members in future years.

However, the 2021/22 offer letter needs to be issued to schools in January 2021, which is several months in advance of the 2020/21 year end when the final position on the scheme finances will be known.

At the time of writing, positive news on COVID vaccinations has been announced, but the roll-out and effectiveness of this development is not yet clear and it remains likely that COVID will have implications for supply scheme costs well into 2021/22.

There was already an intention to increase the premiums for support staff cover in response to the continuing overspends on this element of the scheme.

It is also be usual practice to increase teaching and support staff premiums annually so that reimbursement rates can also increase in line with likely pay rises for the different categories of staff. Recent announcement by the Chancellor have introduced a public sector pay freeze, excluding frontline NHS workers and those earning less than £24,000.

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Operation of the Scheme

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- Self-isolation
Staff who are self isolating due to COVID-19 symptoms or as a result of test and trace will continue to be covered by the scheme, where the school is incurring additional costs by covering the absence as if staff were off ill, and subject to the normal scheme rules, for example, the waiting periods chosen by the school and subject to the school remaining open and scheme reimbursement rates.
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No other changes are proposed to the Scheme SLA.

Scheme Premiums

In order to mitigate against the risk to the scheme reserve due to COVID related pressures, allow for some small increases in the relevant reimbursement rates and respond to the ongoing overspend on the support staff element of the scheme, the following level of increases to premiums are proposed for 2021/22:

- Teaching staff element:+6%
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If need be, premiums can continue to increases at a level marginally above inflation over future years in order reinstate the recommended level of scheme reserve (£1.25m), without the need for a significant premium increases in a single year. Members are also reminded that if the scheme reserve exceeds the level recommended by Forum at any given year end, then the surplus funding is returned to scheme members.

Reimbursement rates

It is proposed the reimbursement rates in the teaching staff scheme for 2021/22 will be held at 2020/21 levels, in line with the Chancellor's decision to freeze public sector pay.

For the support staff scheme, reimbursements are aligned to estimated actual grades of staff in the School Financial Services Budget Preparation Guidance. This

will recognise the pay freeze for staff on higher grades and incorporate the pay rises for staff on less than £24,000 per annum, who will receive a minimum of a £250 increase.

Service Offer to Schools

Once scheme arrangements and charging/reimbursement rates are finalised by the Forum in January 2021, a formal individualised 2021/22 scheme offer will be issued to all schools and academies.

The Working Group

- a) **Noted the report;**
- b) **Supported the proposed 2021/22 School Teaching and Support Staff Supply Reimbursement Scheme arrangements.**

6. High Needs Block Termly Redetermination Process

Some data issues have occurred in the High Needs Block Termly Redetermination Process, partly due to changes in the arrangements for processing the data in the Inclusion Service. The service have looked into this and intend to make a permanent additional appointment to the service for someone responsible for dealing with the data. Appointments are expected after Christmas and this should improve the data validity going forward.

In addition, for the HNB autumn term 2020 redeterminations the higher of autumn 2020 and autumn 20196 has been used. Statements will be issued in the normal way and an additional letter will be issued to each school explaining the calculation and if any top up protection has been included in the redetermination.

PRU representatives reported that the Covid-19 pandemic continued to impact on the NOR at short stay schools and suggested that protections are again need in the spring term 2021,

The Working Group:

- a) **Notes the information;**
- b) **Support the extension of HNB redetermination protections into the spring term 2021.**

7. Exceptional cost claim related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March to July 2020

DfE have now assessed all claims for costs outside of the three eligible categories and have determined there are no new categories of extraordinary costs that they are able to reimburse. They acknowledge that this represents a disappointing outcome for many schools and apologised that it has taken longer than they would have hoped to notify schools, which was due to the significant number of claims received taking longer than anticipated to assess.

As previously announced, there will be a second claims window which will cover any unclaimed eligible costs for the period March to July and free school meal support for the summer holidays for costs outside of the COVID Summer Food Fund:

This will launch in early December, along with details on how to make a claim, and will remain open until 22 December.

There will be no opportunity to submit further claims after that date.

The Working Group:

a) Noted the information

8. The Covid Workforce Fund

On 27 November 2020, the DfE announced new funding to support schools and colleges during Covid pandemic. The Covid workforce fund is to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges.

Schools and colleges facing the greatest combined staffing and funding pressures will be able to claim via a new short-term Covid workforce fund, as part of the government's national priority of keeping education settings open.

The DfE announced the fund which will be backdated to 01 November 2020 and cover the current half term. It is designed for schools and colleges facing significant funding pressure, and will cover the costs of high levels of staff absences over a minimum threshold, to help ensure schools and colleges can remain open.

Schools and colleges will be able to reclaim costs incurred over the course of the current half term, if they meet the following conditions:

- **Financial:** Schools will first need to use any existing financial reserves, as we would typically expect when facing unforeseen costs. They will be eligible for this additional funding once they have used these down to a level at 4% of the annual income. Colleges' eligibility will be based on their cash position set out in the November financial return.
- **Absence rates:** Mainstream schools and colleges must be experiencing a short-term teacher absence rate at or above 20%, and/or a lower long-term teacher absence rate at or above 10% - costs can only be claimed when incurred above this rate.
- **Absence rates:** Special schools and Alternative Provision schools must be experiencing a short-term teacher absence rate at or above 15%, and/or a lower long-term teacher absence rate at or above 10%, to be eligible - costs can only be claimed when incurred above this rate.

Guidance on the claims process will be published by DfE shortly so schools and further education and sixth form colleges have confidence in the costs they can incur and be eligible to reclaim.

The Working Group

a) Noted the report.

Special Academy Schools - Pre 16

Sch No	School Name	2020/21 Academic Pre 16 Place Numbers	2021/22 Academic Pre 16 Place Numbers	Movement in Pre 16 Place Numbers	% Change
14130	Tor View Community Special School	147	159	12	8%
	Total Special Academy Schools Pre 16 Place Numbers	147	159	12	

Special Academy Schools - Post 16

Sch No	School Name	2020/21		2021/22	Movement in Post 16 Place Numbers	% Change
		Agreed Academic Post 16 (no change allowable)	Academic Additional Post 16 Place	Academic Post 16 Place Numbers		
14130	Tor View Community Special School	36	0	36	-	0%
	Total Special Academy Schools Post 16 Place Numbers	36	-	36	-	

FE Colleges - Post 16

Institution Name	2020/21 Current Place Numbers	2021/22 Revised Place Numbers	Movement in FE College Place Numbers	% Change
Accrington and Rossendale College	0	0	0	0%
Burnley College	100	132	32	32%
Cardinal Newman College	36	35	-1	-3%
Lancaster and Morecambe College	102	110	8	8%
Myerscough College	316	316	0	0%
Nelson and Colne College	107	89	-18	-17%
Preston College	100	100	0	0%
Runshaw College	70	76	6	9%
Total	831	858	27	

Mainstream Academy Schools - Post 16

Sch No	School Name	2020/21 Current Place Numbers	2021/22 Revised Place Numbers	Movement in Post 16 Place Numbers	% Change
01502	Lancaster Royal Grammer	3	3	0	0%
01503	Ripley St Thomas CE Academy	1	1	0	0%
11502	Clitheroe Royal Grammer School	2	2	0	0%
11505	Accrington St Christopher's CE High School	25	25	0	0%
	Total	31	31	0	

Alternative Provision Academies

Sch No	School Name	2020/21 Current Place Numbers	2021/22 Revised Place Numbers	Movement in Post 16 Place Numbers	% Change
12504	Coal Clough Academy	140	140	0	0%
	Total	140	140	0	

Maintained Special Schools - Pre 16

Sch No	School Name	2020/21 Academic Pre 16 Place Numbers	2021/22 Academic Pre 16 Place Numbers	Movement in Pre 16 Place Numbers	% Change
00131	Wennington Hall School	65	54	- 11	-17%
00133	Bleasdale School	22	24	2	9%
00134	Royal Cross Primary School	21	21	-	0%
00139	Hillside Specialist School and College	72	83	11	15%
01130	Morecambe And Heysham Morecambe Road School	154	158	4	3%
01131	The Loyne Specialist School	76	77	1	1%
02130	Great Arley School	101	100	- 1	-1%
02131	Brookfield School. Poulton-Le-Fylde	64	70	6	9%
02132	Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School	71	73	2	3%
04133	Kirkham Pear Tree School	75	80	5	7%
06131	Moorbrook School	44	46	2	5%
06134	Acorns Primary School	74	74	-	0%
06135	Sir Tom Finney Community High School	115	121	6	5%
07130	Moor Hey School - A Specialist Mathematics And Computing College	108	110	2	2%
07131	The Coppice School	53	56	3	6%
08135	Hope High School	61	73	12	20%
08136	Kingsbury Primary School	79	79	-	0%
08137	West Lancashire Community High School	76	71	- 5	-7%
08138	Elm Tree Community Primary School	109	106	- 3	-3%
09130	Chorley Astley Park School	170	173	3	2%
09131	Mayfield Specialist School	97	99	2	2%
11130	Oswaldtwistle White Ash School	103	109	6	6%
11131	Broadfield Specialist School For Sen (Cognition And Learning)	110	110	-	0%
12134	The Rose School	67	72	5	7%
12135	Holly Grove School	113	113	-	0%
12136	Ridgewood Community High School	108	118	10	9%
13133	Pendle View Primary School	119	128	9	8%
13134	Pendle Community High School And College	84	100	16	19%
14132	Rawtenstall Cribden House Community Special School	77	88	11	14%
	Total Maintained Special Schools Pre 16 Place Numbers	2,488	2,586	98	

Maintained Special Schools - Post 16

Sch No	School Name	2020/2021 Agreed Post 16 Place (no change allowable)	2021/22 Post 16 Place	Movement in Post 16 Place Numbers	% Change
00131	Wennington Hall School	-	-	-	0%
00133	Bleasdale School	7	10	3	43%
00134	Royal Cross Primary School	-	-	-	0%
00139	Hillside Specialist School and College	17	12	- 5	-29%
01130	Morecambe And Heysham Morecambe Road School	-	-	-	0%
01131	The Loyne Specialist School	37	40	3	8%
02130	Great Arley School	-	-	-	0%
02131	Brookfield School. Poulton-Le-Fylde	-	-	-	0%
02132	Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School	19	21	2	11%
04133	Kirkham Pear Tree School	28	20	- 8	-29%
06131	Moorbrook School	-	-	-	0%
06134	Acorns Primary School	-	-	-	0%
06135	Sir Tom Finney Community High School	53	52	- 1	-2%
07130	Moor Hey School - A Specialist Mathematics And Computing College	-	-	-	0%
07131	The Coppice School	12	8	- 4	-33%
08135	Hope High School	-	-	-	0%
08136	Kingsbury Primary School	-	-	-	0%
08137	West Lancashire Community High School	26	35	9	35%
08138	Elm Tree Community Primary School	-	-	-	0%
09130	Chorley Astley Park School	-	-	-	0%
09131	Mayfield Specialist School	20	23	3	15%
11130	Oswaldtwistle White Ash School	-	-	-	0%
11131	Broadfield Specialist School For Sen (Cognition And Learning)	33	37	4	12%
12134	The Rose School	-	-	-	0%
12135	Holly Grove School	-	-	-	0%
12136	Ridgewood Community High School	22	34	12	55%
13133	Pendle View Primary School	-	-	-	0%
13134	Pendle Community High School And College	44	37	- 7	-16%
14132	Rawtenstall Cribden House Community Special School	-	-	-	0%
	Total Maintained Special Schools Post 16 Place Numbers	318	329	11	

Alternative Provision

AP No	AP Name	2020/21 Academic Place Numbers	2021/22 Academic Place Numbers	Movement in AP Place Numbers	% Change
	Primary				
01141	Stepping Stones	32	32	0	0%
07141	Golden Hill Leyland Centre	50	50	0	0%
13143	Hendon Brook School	34	0	-34	-100%
08138	Elm Tree Community Primary	0	0	0	0%
	Primary	15	10	-5	-33%
	Other	0	10	10	100%
	Secondary				
01149	Chadwick Centre	75	70	-5	-7%
02143	Mckee College House	130	130	0	0%
08147	The Acorns School	75	65	-10	-13%
09145	Shaftesbury High School	120	120	0	0%
06141	Larches House School	110	110	0	0%
11142	Oswaldtwitlse School	95	95	0	0%
	Secondary	0	10	10	100%
	Other : College	100	100	0	0%
	Total AP Place Numbers	836	802	-34	

Maintained Mainstream Provision - SERF Units

School No	School Name	2020/21 Academic SERF Places	2021/22 Academic SERF Places	Movement in SERF Place Numbers	% Change
01011	Lancaster Ridge Community Primary School	0	0	0	0%
01015	Moorside Primary School	0	0	0	0%
06012	Holme Slack Community Primary School	2	1	-1	-50%
06033	Ashton Primary School	0	0	0	0%
08033	Holland Moor Primary School	2	0	-2	-100%
11025	Oswaldtwistle Moor End Community Primary Scho	3	3	0	0%
12022	Burnley Ightenhill Primary School	0	0	0	0%
12043	Burnley Springfield Community Primary School	0	0	0	0%
06104	Ashton Community Science College	10	12	2	20%
12111	Hameldon Community College	0	0	0	0%
	Total SERF Places	17	16	-1	

Special Post 16 Institutions

Year	North Day	North Residential	Central Day	Central Residential	East Day	East Residential	Total
1	6	3	12	2	3	1	27
2	3	1	4	5	11	3	27
3	7	1	6	1	0	0	15
4	4	0	0	1	0	0	5
5	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
6	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	21	5	23	9	15	4	77

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM
Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 10

Title: Recommendations of the Early Years Block Working Group

Appendices A, B and C refer

Executive Summary

On 1 December 2020, the Early Years Block Working Group considered a number of reports, including:

- Early Years Block Funding 2021/22;
- SEN Inclusion Fund;
- Take-up of Funded Places.

A summary of the information presented and the Working Group's recommendations are provided in this report.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) **Note the report from the Early Years Block Working Group held on 1 December 2020;**
- b) **Ratify the Working Group's recommendations.**

Background

On 1 December 2020, the Early Years Block Working Group considered a number of reports. A summary of the information presented and the Working Group's recommendations are provided below.

1. Early Years Block Funding 2021/22

On 25 November 2020, the Chancellor announced additional £44m for early years education in 2021/22. The announcement indicated that the increase was for the hourly rate paid to childcare providers for the government's free hours offers and represents an increase of circa 1.2%.

No further details linked to the increase have yet been provided, so it is unclear whether it relates to 3 and 4 year olds (as per 2020/21 increases) or will also include 2 year old rates. To date, no EYB Operational Guidance for 2021/2 has yet been received

The working group noted that the funding rise will be below the level of inflation faced in the sector, as the Chancellor's spending review also announced a 2.2% increase in the National Living Wage (NLW). Colleagues feedback on the financial pressures on the sector both locally and nationally, which was often greatest for settings serving areas of high deprivation.

A draft letter from the working group Chair to the Schools Forum was shared with members, which highlighted the significant pressures being faced by the sector and asked for consideration of three measures:

- Funding for the 2021 spring term, with at least a similar measure as applied this term in comparing it with spring 2020;
- A one off Covid support payment for each setting;
- Additional funding for the whole of the next financial year.

The working group supported the content of the letter and a final version of the correspondence submitted is provided at Appendix A.

Members were also informed that following initial modelling of DSG allocations for 2020/21, the County council has launched a consultation with schools proposing that Schools Block headroom is again transferred to EYB in 2021/22.

Responses will be reported to Schools Forum in January for a decision and any transfer will also need to be considered in the light of final DSG allocations from the Government, that are expected later in December 2020.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Supported the submission of the letter from the Chair of the EYB Working Group.**

Response to EYB letter to Forum

Subsequent to the working group meeting, the correspondence from the chair was sent and an update is provided below in connection with the 3 key representations made in the EYB letter.

- **Spring Term Funding 2021**

On 17 December 2020, the DfE confirmed that funding for early years for the spring term 2021 will be purely on the basis of the January 2021 census data.

For the summer and autumn terms 2020, protection has applied to early years funding for local authorities, which has allowed settings to be funded on the higher of the summer or autumn term census data, or the numbers for the same term a year earlier, to provide some protection from lower take up of places due to COVID-19.

The December announcement from the DfE confirms that the funding for spring 2021 will return to the usual methodology. The DfE did say that there is some protection that will be provided to local authorities in exceptional circumstances. This exceptional process involves a top-up for LAs where take-up grows after the January 2021 census date, but the criteria includes a threshold of 85% of January 2020 levels and Lancashire expects to be well above that point, as overall take-up in the autumn term 2020 was almost back to autumn 2019 levels.

Initial analysis suggests that it is unlikely that Lancashire will be able to fund continued covid protection for take-up in spring term 2021 now that this has been removed by DfE, especially if the overall early years pupil numbers in Lancashire are back at previous levels in January 2021.

Lancashire will continue to offer the normal supplementary claims processes for providers in the spring term 2021.

- **A one off Covid support payment for each setting**

In response to the suggestion for a covid related payment to be made to early years providers and following further discussions with the working group chair, a consultation was issued on 14 December 2020.

The proposal is for a one-off lump sum payment to be made in the spring term 2021 of £250 for childminders and £1,000 for other early years providers, to assist with covid related costs. As the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve would be used to fund this allocation, views are being sought from all Lancashire schools and academies and early years settings in receipt of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding.

A copy of the consultation document is attached at Appendix B, and contains further details about the proposals and the rationale.

The consultation closes on 8 January 2021. An interim analysis of consultation responses and a full list of comments received by 4 January 2021 is attached at Appendix C. This analysis will be updated once the consultation has closed and any additional comments received will be provided for members.

Members are asked to note that if the proposals were agreed by the Forum in January, the School and Early Years finance regulations would require the county council to submit what is known as a 'disapplication' request to the DfE. This request would need to seek the agreement of the Secretary of State to disapply the regulations and change budget allocations in-year by making the one-off Covid allocation.

The allocation could only be paid out if and when a 'disapplication' were approved.

- **Additional funding for the whole of the next financial year**

Initial estimates suggest that the implementation of the National School Funding Formula (NFF) methodology in Lancashire, including the increased minimum pupil funding (MPF) levels and the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) set at positive +2% is affordable as the local funding formula. Modelling indicates that there could still be circa £2m of headroom available in 2021/22.

A consultation was therefore issued to schools about a transfer of circa £2.0m from the Schools Block to the Early Years Block to help mitigate the impact of pressures on that block.

Further details including the consultation document and the consultation analysis and comments are included in the Schools Block recommendations and the Schools Budget 2021/22 reports.

The Forum will be asked to make a final recommendation about the transfer as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.

2. SEN Inclusion Fund

Following concerns raised at the last meeting, the Chair wrote to the Inclusion Service expressing concerns about inclusion related matters.

Subsequently, the Chair, plus a small group of other representatives, have met with the Inclusion Service colleagues to discuss the issue raised.

Outcomes included:

- The Service to work with a maintained and PVI representative to review the Inclusion Fund process;
- The Service will reinforce the setting visits policy with staff to ensure a consistent approach is provided across the county;
- The Service to work with the Chair to produce a 'video evidence' document to address data protection concerns;
- The Service agreed to investigate delays in settings receiving Request for Involvement (RFI) reports.

A further meeting is to be arranged in the New Year to review progress.

In the meantime, settings were encouraged to escalate any unresolved issues to the service.

Members also asked if there was any feedback from the OfSTED SEND inspection of the Authority, to which some colleagues had contributed and officers agreed to check with Inclusion Service colleagues.

The Working Group

- a) Noted the report;**
- b) Welcomed the actions from the meeting with Inclusion Service colleagues;**
- c) Requested that the Group be kept informed of developments.**

SEND Partnership: Ofsted Revisit

The following update is provided for members in response to the request for information:

Ofsted has published the findings from their revisit to Lancashire to assess improvements made to SEND services.

Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors revisited Lancashire between 9 - 12 March 2020 to assess improvements made to SEND services for children and young people in Lancashire. The purpose of the revisit was to review Lancashire's progress against the twelve areas of significant concern identified during the November 2017 inspection.

During the revisit inspectors met with leaders, managers and frontline workers in health, social care and education. More than 550 parents and carers contributed to the revisit. Inspectors spoke with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and looked at a range of information about the performance of the area. Inspectors considered 239 pieces of evidence and sampled more than 20 Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.

The feedback from the revisit has been positive and overall the inspectors judged that sufficient progress had been made in seven of the twelve area of significant weaknesses identified at the initial inspection.

Some of the important improvements the inspectors found include:

- Provision for SEND is a priority for leaders;
- Strong working relationships across the partnership;
- Clear quality assurance systems in place;
- Good practice being shared across the area; and
- Improved outcomes for children and young people.

The report highlighted five areas for continued targeted improvement work. Partners are working closely with the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England/NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) to agree the key actions for improvement, which will continue to be monitored.

For our SEND services across the partnership this includes:

- Continuing to improve our understanding about the local area;
- Further developing and evaluating our commissioning arrangements;
- Improving the effectiveness of the new neuro-developmental pathway;
- Improving transition arrangements in 0 to 25 healthcare services; and
- Implementing the changes to the Local Offer.

Over the Autumn Term, Lancashire will respond to the findings in the report with a targeted action plan, which will be monitored by the DfE SEND Intervention Unit and NHSE/I, to address the five areas which continue to require improvement.

The report is available at: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80480>

Further information can also be found at:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/your-local-offer/send-inspections/>

3. Take-up of Funded Places.

Information was shared with the group analysing the take-up of funded places in Lancashire. Figures showed a reduction in the take-up of 2 year old places in the county and further analysis revealed some significant variations on a district by district basis.

Officers explained that a number of initiatives were being developed to promote further take-up, both county wide, and targeted at districts with the lowest take-up, including:

- A new parental leaflet;
- A social media campaign, including WhatsApp;
- Assistance from the community engagement teams, particularly in areas of low take up, to help reach BAME communities;
- Development of banners promoting the service.

Members suggested that settings would be able to help disseminate early years information being promoted by the county council, using their own social media and group chat channels, to help spread messages in a coordinated manner. Officers were grateful for this suggestion and agreed to look at how it could be implemented.

The Working Group:

- a) Noted the information;**
- b) Welcomed the initiatives being developed to increase take-up, including the coordination of promotional messages using settings communication channels.**

Shaun Jukes
Chair, Lancashire Schools Forum

Tel. 07966 508 999
Email peter@lancschildcare.co.uk
Date 1 December 2020

C. Sarah Callaghan, Director of Education and Skills
Kevin Smith, Acting Head of Service Schools Finance

Dear Shaun,

Early Years Funding

I am writing to raise issues with Early Years funding across the whole sector. Many of the comments below apply to PVI and MNS alike.

For this financial year it was agreed that an extra 8p/hour would be paid by government for 2yo and 3/4yo. Lancashire, thankfully, found an extra 8p on the 3/4yo rate for one year only.

Settings have had some protection this autumn term by the government offering to protect EEF funds at the rate paid last year. Lancashire took the approach to offer settings, subject to terms and conditions, the higher of the headcount payment for this term or the headcount payment for last autumn.

50% of settings claimed EEF funding for this term higher than autumn 2019. By default this means half of settings did not reach the autumn 2019 levels of EEF.

Whilst there tends to be some relationship between EEF funding and parent paid fees, the above split does not provide any information about the downturn in parent paid fees. There is still some parental resistance to children returning to early years settings.

“Providers that are now fully open are operating with fewer children on roll and fewer numbers of new children than in March. The fact that many parents are working from home has led to a reduction in the number of children attending and demand has reduced. This is making it hard for providers to predict future demand for places. Most providers (two thirds) reported having fewer children on roll, with around a third reporting that they had many fewer children. A quarter of providers said their numbers had remained the same and only 9% reported having more children on roll. Over half of providers said they had fewer children on roll than they would normally expect.” (*Changes in Demand, Ofsted Covid-19 briefing on early years October 2020*)

Some childminders are reporting having to take extra jobs to make ends meet.

Settings have had to self-fund extra costs of managing bubbles, staff absence due to both positive test and precautionary self-isolation. Settings have had to increase the use of PPE, purchase extra equipment, increase cleaning labour and cleaning equipment. Settings have also had to reduce the occupancy to manage the bubbles and for separation of children and staff. Many settings are reporting increased SEND issues. Some settings have had to borrow through the Bounce Back Loan, overdrafts, delayed mortgage and rent payments and some owners have had to truncate or manage without their own salary to survive.

“The pandemic has put many providers in a difficult financial position. Over half (58%) of the providers we spoke to had faced financial difficulties as a result of it. Almost half (48%) rated financial difficulties among the top three challenges that they had to face. Settings were having to absorb increased costs, for example for PPE, alongside less income. Some said that government funding levels were an issue for them, including funding for increased numbers of children with SEND. A few providers were worried about what will happen when they have to repay their government loan.” *(The financial sustainability of the early years sector, Ofsted Covid-19 briefing on early years October 2020)*

What is the impact of all this on quality delivery? The importance of the first 1000 days?
“Total spending per child is projected by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and the Children’s Commissioner to fall by 12% in real terms between 2010/11 and 2020/21, thereby reversing some of rapid increases in spending that occurred during the early 2000s.” *(Section 70, First 1000 days of life, Health and Social Care Committee, 12 Feb 2019)*

With the second lockdown no real end is in sight until the latter part of next calendar year, assuming the anti-virus programme is effective. Whilst the sector appreciates Lancashire consolidating and prepaying the first two prepayments for the spring term to support cashflow, it is net neutral on the receipts.

Minimum wage is to rise by 2.2% from April 1st 2021. The government has offered an increase on EEF of 1.2%. This means that for an average setting parents will have to find an extra 3-10% depending on the mix of EEF to parent fee income for a setting to balance the books. This rise excludes any recovery of the extra Covid costs. Parents already struggling from job losses, furlough, and extra borrowings, may have to cut child attendance hours rather than pay extra, a further hit for children in lower income households.
We need some help.

In a recent All Party Parliamentary Group Zoom, I was saddened to hear that representatives of the sector reflected that they were “undervalued”, “underfunded”, “treated as second class citizens” and “not worth funding” and yet at the same time there was the expectation of higher quality and increased demands. What a sad state to be in.

“Investing in the early years is the best investment any government can make and saves money in the long-term. We recommend that the Government use the 2019 Spending Review as an opportunity to initiate the next early years revolution with a secure, long-term investment in prevention and early intervention to support parents, children and families during this critical period.” *(Summary, First 1000 days of life, Health and Social Care Committee, 12 Feb 2019)*

We all know how that turned out!

I am asking for Forum to consider how it and Lancashire County Council can support each of these measures:

1. Funding for the 2021 spring term, with at least a similar measure as applied this term in comparing it with spring 2020
2. A one off Covid support payment for each setting
3. Additional funding for the whole of the next financial year

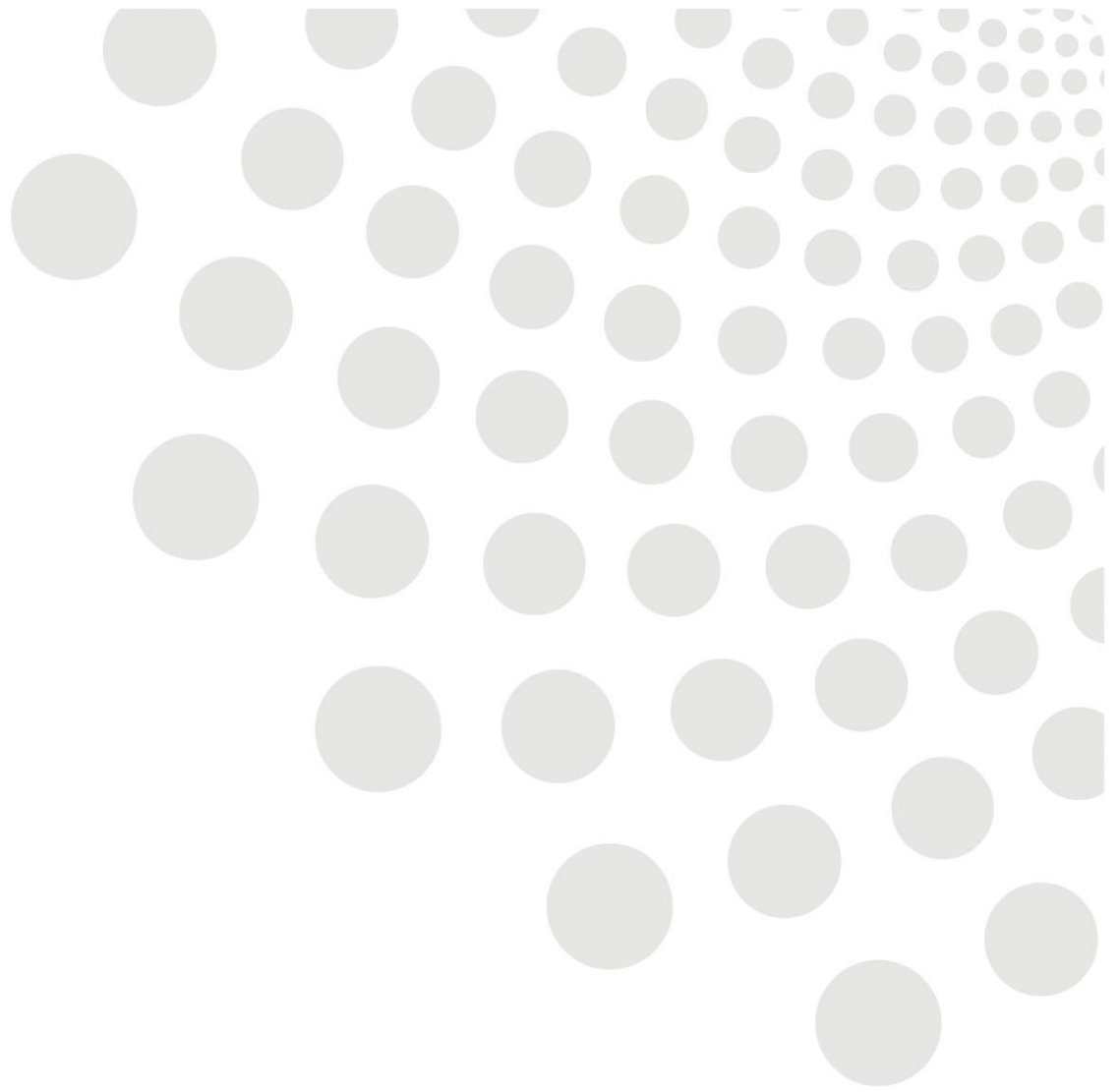
With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Hindle'.

Peter Hindle

Chair, Lancashire Schools Forum Early Years Block Working Group



Consultation on a proposal to make a one-off Covid allocation to Lancashire early years providers in Spring 2021

Consultation on a proposal to make a one-off Covid allocation to Lancashire early years providers in Spring 2021

Summary

The proposal is for a one-off lump sum payment to be made in the spring term 2021 of £250 for childminders and £1,000 for other early years providers, to assist with covid related costs.

Further information and the rationale for the proposal is provided below. Please let us know your view by using the eform available [here](#), by **8 January 2021**.

Background

Government guidance has placed the same expectations on Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) and Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) early years providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, as those set out for mainstream schools.

Providers were asked to remain open for vulnerable children and for the children of key workers during the first national lockdown, commence reopening from June 2020 and to remain fully open during lockdown 2.0. During this period, early years settings have faced the same challenges as schools, including:

- Managing pupil bubbles and associated increased staffing costs;
- Additional premises related costs associated with extra cleaning;
- Purchasing additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Costs related to hand sanitisation;
- Managing increased staff absences due to both positive test and precautionary self-isolation.

As with schools, the core early education funding provided by Government was protected during the outbreak, but early years providers were not allowed access to the additional funding that was made available by the DfE to support mainstream and special schools and academies with some of the Covid related costs, for example:

- Exceptional cost claim related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) from March to July 2020;
- Covid Workforce fund to support with costs of staff absences in schools and colleges;
- Covid-19 Catch Up Premium.

We know that these additional funds have not met all the extra Covid costs being borne by schools and that there have been claim processes to follow and conditions attached. However, the Schools Forum believe that early years providers, both maintained and PVI, should have had access to these funds, in a similar way to schools.

The Forum and the County Council have made various representations to the Secretary of State and to DfE officials on this, and other Covid related issues. Responses from the DfE have not indicated any change to the government's position on this matter.

Following further discussions with the Schools Forum's Early Years Working Group, it is proposed to make a local contribution to the additional Covid related costs at MNS and PVI providers of early education, to acknowledge the extra costs being borne by the early years sector and offer some equity with the schools and high needs sectors in Lancashire.

The proposal is for a one-off lump sum payment to be made in the spring term 2021 of £250 for childminders and £1,000 for other providers. Providers would need to be offering Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funded early education hours to qualify and would not include nursery classes at primary schools and academies, as additional costs for this early years provision could be included in any claims to national funds available for schools.

The total cost of this one-off Covid early years contribution would be circa £700,000 and would need to be met from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve.

The DSG reserve underwrites the expenditure across all the school funding blocks in the DSG budget, including the Early Years Block, and the Schools and High Needs Blocks, and had a closing balance of £11.151m, at the end of 2019/20.

For the 2019/20 financial year, the Early Years Block reported an underspend of £1.836m, so the one-off allocation to the sector proposed for 2020/21 represents less than half the amount contributed to reserves by early years at the end of the last financial year. Due to the way that the early years funding allocations to Lancashire are calculated, using data that is updated across future January census points, means that some of the 2019/20 underspend will very likely be needed in the future to offset reduced allocations if fewer children are attending settings.

Please let us know your views

A decision on whether to make a one-off Covid related allocation to early years settings in the spring term 2021 will be made by the Schools Forum on 12 January 2021 and the Forum would welcome your views to help steer their decision.

As the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve would be used to fund this allocation, views are being sought from all Lancashire schools and academies and early years settings in receipt of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding.

You can respond to the consultation by completing the eform available [here](#) by **8 January 2021**.

Question: Do you agree with the proposal to make a one-off Covid allocation to Lancashire early years providers in spring 2021?

- **Yes;**
- **No;**
- **Not sure.**

DfE Approval

Please note that if the proposals were agreed by the Forum in January, the School and Early Years finance regulations would require the county council to submit what is known as a 'disapplication' request to the DfE. This request would need to seek the agreement of the Secretary of State to disapply the regulations and change budget allocations in-year by making the one-off Covid allocation.

The allocation could only be paid out if and when a 'disapplication' were approved.

Consultation on a proposal to make a one-off Covid allocation to Lancashire early years providers in Spring 2021

The consultation closes on 8 January 2021. An interim analysis of consultation responses and a full list of comments received by 4 January 2021 is provided in this appendix.

The analysis will be updated once the consultation has closed and any additional comments received will be provided for members.

Analysis

To date, 455 consultation responses have been received. An analysis of these responses is shown below:

Question: Do you agree with the proposal to make a one-off Covid allocation to Lancashire early years providers in Spring 2021?				
Type of Setting	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
Private, Voluntary and Independent Setting	103	0	4	107
Primary School or Academy with Nursery Class	55	5	3	63
Other Maintained School or Academy	28	0	3	31
Maintained Nursery School	31	1	1	33
Eligible Child Minder	197	1	9	207
Other	12	2	0	14
Totals	426	9	20	455
	94%	2%	4%	

Comments

A full set of comments received in the consultation process to date are provided in this appendix, with key themes to emerge from the responses including:

- Thanks, agree, welcome the proposals;
- Proposals not enough to cover the actual costs, or discussion of wider costs/impact;
- A different methodology should be used:

- especially childminders suggesting equal payments,
- size criteria
- recognition of opening periods/working through lockdowns;
- related to closures for self-isolation.
- Request for the proposals to cover settings not in receipt of DSG funding;
- Small number of comments not supporting the proposals at all.

A full list of comments are provided below:

Schools would welcome this!!!!

How much would the one off allocation be?

The amount is better than nothing but is still a small amount of money.

Unfortunately the funding, if approved, will come too late for some providers who may have already 'gone to the wall' due to the impact of COVID. Will there be efforts made to support these providers and assist any that wish to re-establish their provision.

I have bought more cleaning products, wipes and hand gel. I have made and bought more mailable resources such as sand and play dough as children can't share and it has to be replaced after every use.

Why should this be a one off payment when it's unclear how long the additional costs of working during the pandemic will continue for?

i think for the Amount of work we have put in throughout this unprecedented time putting our self & our family's at risk we have been open all the way through this i think the payment should be more

COVID has caused many problems for childminders. Any financial support to try and keep these small businesses afloat would be gratefully received.

Think all settings should be treat the same

Yes I would welcome extra support

There should be an equity in proposal with all early years settings benefitting from it. You are potentially giving it to private companies (nurseries) and not to the state run sector.

Yes as long as it is not discriminatory!! I haven't had any funded children this year due to covid ect so why should providers lose out

I have been Childminding and paying tax for 19 years. Due to an error in sending my 2019-2020 tax return I have had no financial support.

Where will the funding come from? Although the additional money would be useful, we would not be able to cut spending elsewhere or lose other additional funding to make this available.

Finance is spread thin as it is, we then had to purchase extra cleaning equipment, pay extra for staff to keep our bubbles separate etc

I know how much I spent getting my house covid ready for the children to attend every day, others closed their doors, never worked a day through the pandemic so had no incurred costs. I feel that some recognition of our continued hard work keeping the children in our care in a safe environment.

It is very important that we support this group as it begins to put the foundation in place for learning.

This is a good step but does not go far enough to compensate the losses that EY providers have suffered due to COVID. Also for childminders to get a quarter of the amount that nursery's will get is unfair. we have suffered significantly higher losses as nursery's have been eligible for many grants through this time that we

have been excluded from. So once again we are offered less and feel valued less, No wonder so many childminders are/ have leaving the sector.

The impact in my business due to Covid has been huge. Some days I am working for far less than minimum wage. With just two children some days working 10.5hrs my gross wage is £6/hr then take expenses including fuel, meals, activities and tax out, I'm lucky to clear £5/hr I have been a childminder for almost 12yrs and really want my business to continue with 6 key worker children on my books including head teacher, teacher, nurse, pharmaceutical distribution and council worker. I am certainly not doing this job for the money, however I am not sure how much longer I can continue operating with these low numbers.

This would be a great help towards the extra costs we have had to find due to cleaning etc and the loss of children not attending therefore loss of money.

I think that this will help towards the significant costs and difficulties that maintained Nursery Schools and Early Years settings have faced over the past 9 months and show that this has been valued.

We've had a great deal of hardship and lost earnings. I wasn't eligible for any government grants as I made a loss 3 years ago, not fair at all when I've been running my business for 13 years

I have had no help from the government

covid has really affected my business but not had much help being self employed so this would really help

Whilst anything is helpful, I feel that those settings which remained open throughout the first lockdown should receive some additional recognition. I say this as a setting which remained open throughout.

Whilst anything is helpful, I feel that those settings which remained open throughout the first lockdown should receive some additional recognition. I say this as a setting which closed but made arrangements for key worker children to attend a sister setting which remained open throughout..

no comments to add, thank you

Yes I agree to the proposal of £1000.00 one off payment but it doesn't cover any where near what the pre-school has lost since March 2020.

Whilst anything is helpful, I feel that those settings which remained open throughout the first lockdown should receive some additional recognition. I say this as a setting which closed but made arrangements for key worker children to attend a sister setting which remained open throughout..

Whilst anything is helpful, I feel that those settings which remained open throughout the first lockdown should receive some additional recognition. I say this as a setting which closed but made arrangements for key worker children to attend a sister setting which remained open throughout..

The past months have been difficult for most. As an ofsted registered childminders we've continued supporting other keyworker staff throughout the pandemic. This however has been with reduced hours, loss of revenue and loss of business in one way or another but yet we've still had to complete a full weeks work; 50-60 hours for some but not received a full time pay because of the losses.

Additional costs as outlined in your letter - PPE, sanitising, additional staffing costs, plus extra washing of equipment and resources plus purchase of resources due to rotation of items

I imagine a a lot off people like my self have been hard hit with the loss of income due to parents losing work ECT and no new work appearing due to the on going pandemic .every little helps to keep use going .Thank you

Private nurseries have provided essential childcare throughout the pandemic with dwindling numbers due to parents losing employment or furloughed. Any financial help would be welcome.

This would really help my setting after not receiving any other financial help through lockdowns and I know it would help many others

The impact in my business due to Covid has been huge. Some days I am working for far less than minimum wage. With just two children some days working 10.5hrs my gross wage is £6/hr then take expenses including fuel, meals, activities and tax out, I'm lucky to clear £5/hr

one-off Covid allocation should be proportionate to the size of the setting.

Additional costs incurred for cleaning materials/sanitizer etc whilst reduced numbers, as childminder, have always been full with frequent enquiries, but have had vacancies now since reopening after first lockdown

This would help greatly, we haven't been able to apply for any other grants or help, we have seen a significant drop in number of children using our service but with added pressure of separating into different bubbles means we have had to keep all staff on and use more areas of school.

Very thoughtful of this sector. Thank you.

I already submitted but realised I hadn't filled in my OFSTED registration number I am working in my home in Tier 3, and have my own two primary-school-aged children. My current risk-assessment includes that I can manage to provide childcare for one family until the situation improves; there is a lot more admin, cleaning, work-related stress, and parenting pressures due to the pandemic. The one family I childmind for are not currently eligible for FEE/access FEE at school, and I am not looking for new starters at my setting. Therefore, I do not know if I should currently be given Covid-19-related financial support linked to being a FEE provider.

I think this is a good idea as Private Early Years Settings have been extremely stretched over this past 9month period and have probably endured the most challenging financial period of there time.

I believe there should have been more support for those exempt from government grants who remained open throughout like myself due to not being self employed long enough.

Providers have been hit hard, my turnover is about 1 third of normal with no new children due to start. I don't know when things will pick up so any further support is welcome.

This would be extremely helpful to make up for lost income during the pandemic.

Thank you!

a one off payment would be a big help as for 6 months i earnt nothing although i remained available for key workers no one used my services as i was to out of the way for them .

We are not charging parents when they are isolating or when we have been closed. This seems like the fairest thing to do, but it is not sustainable and we have lost income as a result.

As a childminder I have occurred a significant increase in running costs as a direct result of Covid -19. Where I would usually be able to take the children out, we have had to stay in far more than usual, which has led to me needing to make adaptations to the setting in order to keep the children engaged and entertained for such long periods indoors/in my private garden. E.g we built an allotment solely for the children, we've bought far more craft resources than usual, converted spare

room into additional childcare space, twinkle subscription and additional educational materials for school age children whilst schools were closed. We have also had an increase in cost of cleaning materials, and we have paid for professional cleaners to do termly deep cleans.

This payment would be very much appreciated as childminders in this area did not receive any help with purchasing additional cleaning products or extra paperwork that we had to provide. Personally I worked through the first lockdown with key workers children placing myself and family at a greater risk. More time is spent at the beginning and end of the day doing extra cleaning to make sure the environment is as safe as it possibly could be. So Thankyou in advance if we get this one off payment. Tracey

Even though now I'm fully back up and running, I have had to close due to self isolating and lost a substantial amount of money and may have to do this again. Even though the government grant topped up previous loses, we have no measures in place if this happens again and again. With no end date in site, the payment would be a blessing.

I do feel that childminders should maybe get a little more as they were unable to apply for any other local grants that other settings were able to

It would be a great help,.

Very useful as I've spent lots of money on PPE since the pandemic

This would be massively helpful to me. As a childminder who had been in business just under 12 months at the time COVID-19 hit, I wasn't entitled to any financial help at all. It's been a very difficult time. The one negative thing I would like to point out is the huge difference in the amount proposed to childminders. I work as hard, provide the same level of care as other early years providers (I.e. nursery's), I had to keep my home open to children and families during a very worrying time putting my own family at risk in order to survive financially and to provide support for my key working families, yet we are potentially being offered the lowest amount. It would be nice to be recognised as the professional early year's providers we are as childminders. Many of us are feeling seriously undervalued. Many thanks, Ellen Robinson

The lump sum payment will help. But the numbers of children coming in has dropped significantly from previous years. This is having a big impact on all 3 of our settings. The funding for spring and summer terms should be based on numbers of previous year, if possible please. Much appreciated.

Covid-19 has had a massive impact on our setting. We have remained open throughout the pandemic. As a childcare setting based inside an LCC building and who buy into LCC HR and payroll services we have only been able to access the furlough scheme and no other financial help. The additional cleaning materials and covid-19 secure resources that have been required have put a strain on our finances. This has impacted on all the staff, we have had to reduce all their hours, close one of our settings and money is very tight, we are only just keeping afloat. Although £1000 is not a lot of money, it will at least help towards the continuing cleaning costs that we have still got due to covid-19.

I have no further comments to make.

I am pleased to know that the extra costs to settings due to Covid-19 are being acknowledged and an allocation will be very much appreciated.

I think this is a great idea & I will take anything atm because I am currently working at a loss, even if it is only £500. At least it will help to top up some of the funds lost

due to losing children who are no longer coming to the setting due to covid related redundancy. I just think it needs to be a little more than £250.

Would be extremely helpful to finally receive some help but we should be classed the same as nursery's as we are just as qualified and look after the same age children

yes

I think this is a fantastic idea for settings such as myself, being a limited company there has been no funding available to help through the pandemic. I have remained open every week since the start of the first lockdown with no breaks. I have lost some of my customers that weren't classed as key workers first time round and been fortunate to be able to fill those spaces with key workers children to do my part through the ongoing pandemic. The costs of PPE and cleaning materials have been extensive this year to help maintain a clean and virus free setting. While this funding is a mere drop in the ocean compared to the costs suffered to remain open, without remaining open it would have cost much more than just my livelihood, possibly my home too. Any funding/grants available to settings such as myself that have been entitled to nothing are always welcomed to help the necessary outgoing to remain open safely.

Would be good if we are classed the same as nursery's as we are all Ofsted registered and fully qualified to look after the same age children

I'm happy with the proposal

I'm happy about the one off payment

These have been difficult times for our sector and this financial support would be extremely beneficial for our children.

It will really help financially

I am a registered childminder. Unfortunately throughout the pandemic I have received no help at all from my local authority. This is because out of the 4 children I had on my books none of them received funding and only 1 child's parents was a key worker. From a financial point of view my earning was massively reduced through no fault of my own. I still had the additional cost of cleaning products and masks etc with no help at all. Other minders receiving funding still got paid funding whereas I received nothing. Maybe the authorities need to consider how this pandemic has affected those not receiving funding a little more. I personally felt let down and forgotten about.

Extra costs to our setting include additional cleaning materials, additional staffing, additional hygiene products including soap and paper towels. Any additional funding towards these costs would be gratefully received. Thank you.

This is a brilliant idea and would come in very useful to cover the cost that we have paid for extra cleaning and ppe equipment and cover the cost of paper towels etc I think you may want to increase the childminders as self isolation has a massive impact on their income, family and other families but yet still incur all their costs. This payment would help immensely as we are struggling financially due to lower numbers attending because of Covid-19 and the extra costs for PPE and cleaning materials

We are frustrated that as Maintained Nursery Schools we have not been entitled to either other school sector funding for Covid, or the council tax relief that the PVI's have been offered. It feels very unfair that we fit in neither box for support given how difficult a financial situation we are all in.

As long as it's in addition to the government announced grant for funding deficit due to covid-19 which is also due around the same time.

Very disappointed! As a childminder I was not entitled to the grant from the council as I didn't have premises. I was paid no furlough when closed because I am self employed. I received a payment of self employed income, which was not the equivalent of 80% of earns as previous years brought the average down. I lost weeks of wages then managed to reopen fir key workers children. During this time I put myself and family at risk. I paid for extra cleaning items, PPE and sand sanitiser. I spent hours cleaning the premises and toys each day. When covid was brought into my home by a child I care for and I tested positive I received no help or wages because I closed. I was happy to see the possibility of a payment but totally dismayed to see you had to have funded children! Totally unfair! Especially when you consider a lot of funded nurseries closed their doors, still took the funding, while people like myself continued to work and put ourselves at risk. Not happy with this proposal, it needs rethinking for all those who have constantly missed out!

These have been difficult times for our sector and this financial support would be extremely beneficial for our children.

Although the amount will not cover all of the additional costs that are being incurred due to COVID, the amount is a welcome gesture that will help.

This would be a great help to us as we are small setting and have been unable to access any government funding as we are based in the community centre and don't pay business rates.

A token £1000 will be very much appreciated and welcomed, this cost would cover some of the money spent on PPE/ extra cleaning materials so thank you.

However, a large percentage of our loss has been on staffing costs (covering staff off work with children isolating and / or taking tests / waiting for tests for self or other household member and / or isolating due to confirmed case in household)

Support staff are only covered on LCC insurance after 10 working days, so we are unable to claim. Staffing costs have also significantly increased due to bubble groups, if we put all children together, we could stick to EYFS ratios, however staff are working in bubbles so we are over ratios . IE we may have 20 children in one afternoon, if we didn't have bubbles we would meet EYFS ratios with 2 staff, however we have 3 bubbles , so require one practitioner in each bubble. There are many complications to the bubbles this is just one of them, but you can see how quickly additional staffing costs increase.

I have had additional cleaning costs and pp costs. I have also purchased new toys due to children not accessing the usual play centres and toddler groups and also much more fraft equipment than normal

I have forgotten to put my Ofsted number, so attached it to this one.

Would be lovely to be classed the same as nursery's as we are Ofsted registered and fully qualified the same

A token £1000 will be very much appreciated and welcomed, this cost would cover some of the money spent on PPE/ extra cleaning materials so thank you.

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however we have 3 bubbles , so require one practitioner in each bubble. There are many complications to the bubbles this is just one of them, but you can see how quickly additional staffing costs increase.

This is a very generous proposal. However I feel it doesn't reach the providers that really need it. I was unfortunate enough not to have any funded children on role, purely because the previous year I'd had an almost full cohort reach school age and moved on. Meaning that all the new cohort were too young to be eligible for funding. It was purely circumstances not that I was purposefully not choosing to provide funded placements. As a result of this I have very little financial help during forced closures and the lack of children accessing places following lockdown, meaning I was open to support those families returning to work, but it wasn't viable for me as I was running at a significant loss. I felt I had to run at a loss to secure future business or my families would have no option but to seek alternative child care. Things returned back to an almost normal level in September so I'm now just about holding my head above water so to speak, but the loss of earnings from March to September has had a huge negative impact on my business and therefore family. This allowance further supports the ones that have already been well supported. Rather than it being a blanket payment I feel it should be applied for and open to all EY providers who can prove a significant loss of earnings/ rising costs and the payment will make a real difference to. I will have children accessing funding from the January so would be eligible thankfully. However many will still be in the position I was and yet some who have been well supported already, the additional money would be a nice to have but not a life line as such. By making it a payment that has to be applied for and evidence provided would probably cost less overall and reach the most hard hit of Early Years Settings. I welcome this support as an early years provider who has seen huge financial implications during COVID. Although I do feel strongly that I must highlight that the £1000 does not even come close to the loss and additional costs we are seeing due to this pandemic. Having had a closure of two of my bubbles in the last month and a loss of over £7000 of private fees (never mind the additional costs/loss that we are facing on a weekly basis due to COVID), I wonder how long we are going to be able to cope financial, with the risk that this can happen again at anytime. I worry we will see more closures of early years settings who are in the same position as ourselves. However with all that said I don't want to sound ungrateful and I would still gratefully receive any financial support from our Authority. Thank you

Loss of income for 14 weeks then reduced income due to parent taking unpaid leave after maternity leave finished.

It is crucial that Early Years providers, especially Maintained Nursery Schools, receive this money. The financial pressures that Covid19 has brought to the school of which I am a Governor have been considerable, and clearly endanger the sustainability of the EY sector.

I support the proposal for the reasons outlined in the accompanying letter. I'm sure there are a number of childminders that have lost most of not all of their income during this time. Any contribution to help financially will be greatly appreciated.

Any financial help is greatly appreciated

The £1,000 payment will be greatly appreciated. Unfortunately our costs go well beyond this (building alternations, additional cleaning products, damage to resources due to constant antibaccing) but we appreciate that Lancashire has

recognised the financial strain on early years providers and wish that the DfE would do the same.

This would help with additional cleaning costs, and other sundry expenses incurred due to Covid.

Can I ask why the £250 is only being paid to people who had funded children , I worked all the way through lockdown putting myself and my family at risk of catching Covid but I never had any funded children , why are you not paying every childminder that has been open since March , I feel we're being penalised again for not having funded children , I think everyone should get the grant .

I think this might go some way to mitigate the additional costs for cleaning / PPE equipment / additional resources for Home learning delivery that we have had to find . We were quite disturbed by not being included in the DfE Covid funding that all schools were eligible for.

Despite the fact that most schools were not eligible to claim costs for PPE, additional cleaning, or staff absences due to the rules surrounding each; we feel the maintained nurseries and childcare places should be provided with funds to support. But ONLY if they did not charge parents when the setting/bubble was forced to close.

Covid has impacted my business hugely. I'm working for far less than minimum wage some days with just two children working 10.5hrs. I have 5 key workers children on my books including head teacher, teacher and nurse. I don't want to close a business I've managed for 12 years successfully

As it has been a tough year for everyone, I feel early years settings would benefit from any additional funding possible.

yes I agree that any funding for early years should be spread out equally.. as other funding isn't available for all. A lot of childminders are missing out and others r massively gaining Which isn't fair. Help is needed for all early years setting .

I had to lots of new resources due to spending more time at home, also had to pay insurance etc during lockdown.

I know that there was talk of the hourly rate being raised and i am not sure if this is instead of etc. Whilst a £1000 seems fair to combat the amount spent on things like sanitisers etc i am unsure if the hourly rate would have been more beneficial to providers (obviously dependent on the amount of increase). Lancashire has always been the lowest hourly rate paid which is debated each year

yes I do agree, as I am childminding part time I do before and after school and holidays, because I have only been doing this for just over 12 months, I have not been entitled to grants, we have opened up our homes and put ourselves and families at risk to provide our service.

The additional staff costs faced by nurseries has been considerable during the pandemic. Staff are regularly having to isolate because either: they've got symptoms and are awaiting test results; someone in their household has tested positive; etc. This has meant that we are having to employ supply staff (at twice the cost of regular staff). The staff wages are the largest cost to nurseries - by a very big margin. So, any increase makes a substantial hole in our budgets!!

I have lost all of my school children due to Covid and am therefore earning a lot less than I normal would.

The COVID allocation would make a significant impact. We have had no choice but to spend additional money on staffing and cleaning products - all money has come out of our allocated budget for 2020/2021 and of course, additional COVID-19 spending was not something that we had allocated for!

I had to close my business down for 3 months which resulted in no fees from my parents due to the need of childcare not needed as they weren't classed as keyworkers and could work from home. When reopening I had to provide staff with essential PPE which included aprons, gloves, masks, hand gel, hand soap, paper towels and cleaning essentials (this is still a running high cost now). We had to buy an outside storage unit with lids to store the childrens belongings as they could not come in the premises. Since reopening we have not had the demand that we had previous to lockdown and parents are still working from home which has resulted in me losing a member of staff and not giving the other two part time staff as many hours leaving me regularly not to full capacity daily (some days it is not profitable for me to open). Losing anymore sessions for children would result in me having to close for good

Childminders have not been able to access other grants so this would be amazing to enable many settings to stay open

Although I am sure it would be appreciated and help, our financial costs impacted by COVID have been constant over the last 9 months and is looking to continue well into the new year, these costs will keep on mounting up.

with extra staff costs, due to self isolation a one off payment of £1000.00 wont cover extra costs the private sector have incurred

Would be a lovely gesture we have worked straight this pandemic supporting parents with extra days and hours. Childminders aren't thought of very often I would be very grateful.

Worked very hard during this pandemic extra days and hours when others around us closed their doors. Would be most grateful for a little extra income.

What I would prefer is some kind of support funding for when we have to close 'bubbles' due to covid and parents do not expect to pay if their child is not allowed to attend. This is the financial burdon at present and so far has cost me in excess of £5000. In nursery it was necessary to close our preschool room for 2 weeks. In our out of school club we have had to close 2 different bubbles on two seperate occasions due to covid in classrooms and the child/ren not even on our register but obviously other children attend. Again parents do not expect to pay for this and the government did not help by enforcing a rule that we could not charge ! Its a ridiculous situation

THIS IS BADLY NEEDED TO HELP ADDRESS SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OUR FAMILIES ARE FACING DUE TO COVID AND BREXIT

Cleaning routines and products have increased as has home made playdough and bought sand.

The payment will contribute towards rising costs to deal with COVID but doesn't come anywhere near the additional costs incurred during the past 9 months.

This should also be made available to Out of School clubs. While they have increased staffing costs in order to maintain bubbles, their income has been significantly reduced due the a fall rate demand.

As a self-employed Childminder in my first tax year working self-employed, I had no evidence of my income to be eligible for any support during the first England lockdown. I lost out on income from three families from March 23rd until June 1st 2020. This was due to the families being told to work from home if possible. I was fortunate to receive full pay from one key worker family who continued to attend and for a child receiving EEF payments. A wide range of government support was available for many but there has been no support for the self-employed like me who have not yet got proof of income from a self assessment tax return. On top of

this, we have also had to deal with the financially crippling set up fees and buying resources to set up our brand new careers. I would urge you to please prioritise those of us who have received no financial support what so ever.

The amount of £1000 is not really anywhere near the amount of monies spent on ensuring my setting is safe for our children and staff. It would be interesting to see how this amount was decided.

Coronavirus is likely to be really bad come January and no one knows how their business will be financially affect. £250 is better than nothing though.

£250 would cover the cost of addition resources to make my home Covid secure. I have still lost income with not mixing bubbles so not doing before and after school care to maintain bubbles and drop in demand so the extra payment in the Spring term to cover lost income of the 30hrs claimed is still needed.

Thank you!

It has been a very difficult year and settings are struggling maintaining their usual high standards this will help greatly

Catch up with reading / phonics needed desperately, without which access to curriculum is challenging.

Our EYFS provision has been badly affected by Covid. We lost a considerable amount of income during the summer term. Any additional funding would be extremely helpful.

As a governor at the above school I quite aware of the additional costs incurred by the nursery. £1000 will be a welcome help but will not cover all the additional costs.

This payment would be a huge help towards all the extra cleaning products. We are also a new setting and opened in Sept 2020, we have been hit hard due to opening later than planned because Ofsted had a backlog of registration visits and also we have children that were due to start with us but haven't as parents are working from home.

Significant costs spent to ensure we had sufficient personal hygiene equipment/ppe/additional cleaning hours; additional resources to ensure that bubbles are kept separate.

We have incurred various costs since March which we have not been able to recover via the government covid reimbursement scheme. Things such as - additional handtowels, hand wash and cleaning solutions, hand sanitizer and stations, the cost of extra bins in classrooms the additional commercial refuse bin due to the amount of rubbish that we now have. We have also incurred additional costs for lunchtime staff to ensure that all bubbles are covered during the lunch break and to ensure that teachers get a break. We have had to forego a KS1 toilet refurb which was badly needed due to lack of funds. We have also lost over £75k in extended day and catering income due to Covid.

We have repeated some of the early years work missed from March onwards in our setting - we have increased our spend on consumables and sensory activities in order to meet the 'halted' developmental need of our special pupils.

This is absolutely necessary , private settings have had no financial support at all, we was turned down for the £ 10,000 the £ 25,000 and the £ 1,500 grants by lancaster county council, additionally we paid all staff the first month on furlough to be told 2 weeks later that ' actually we are not entitled too the scheme' even thou we was told initially we was, again loosing out on over £ 6,000 in paid wages. We have had no help with ppe or to cover cover systems to be put inlace, we have had to pay redundancies as the work load wasn't there between March- November of

this year again another outlay. minimum wage is going up again which as it has for the last 10 years been far superior to the minute inflation rise we receive from the government for ' free funded children hours ' both 15 and 30 hrs! i appreciate that we got the full amount of funding based on previous numbers in April but that hasn't covered the short fall for the 9 months so far.

I just wanted to point out that childminders, as self-employed individuals, were also offered the HMRC self-employed support grants if they were eligible (for example due to increased costs and/or reduced income). I thought it relevant to mention just in case the consultation has not already taken this in to account as a means of some childminders having already been financially supported.

Childminders also work contracts which are paid for by parents and not always funded through FEE. Therefore, it is potentially confusing for a childminder to have claimed financial support as a self-employed individual and to then get unexpected FEE financial support later on. For example, a childminder may not fully understand where to allocate anomalous payments like the FEE 'top up' and the 'one-off Covid allocation' in to their self-employed income. Presumably, anomalous support payments like the FEE 'top up' and 'one-off Covid allocation' are income when received/in the term they are received in and presumably they are to be included as income on the self-assessment tax return in the tax year in which they are received.

Would be v gratefully received

I think this would help settings greatly especially as we have had to buy our own PPE protective resources and company's we usually use have increased the price of the PPE due to Covid times which has made it very expensive for pre-school settings like ours. Example for gloves, masks, aprons etc. The cost of these items have not been free or cheap.

It shouldn't be nurseries only though all schools should get this, we are a pupil referral & we have had to spend £12000 out of school budget (initially) to ensure school was Covid 19 safe for reopening , this wasn't planned for & are still paying to maintain this safe environment.

An additional payment of £1000 would be welcomed in our setting, particularly with additional costs this year with regards to PPE/cleaning etc.

I am not sure because a one off payment may not be sufficient to cover on going covid demands.

The proposed payment would be very helpful as nurseries have had additional running cost because of covid-19: PPE, cleaning materials etc.

Any payment should be linked to the number of children at settings as this would influence the amount of PPE spending to ensure a safe environment.

Yes, Thank you!

Great idea especially for those who have had to close for months in 2020

This does not cover the amount of money already spent on PPE etc

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting: 12 January 2021

Item No 12

Title: Forum Correspondence

Appendix A refers

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on Forum related correspondence since the last meeting.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report;
- b) Express any views on the correspondence received.

Background

This report provides an update on Forum related correspondence received since the last meeting.

Other Forum related correspondence has been considered at relevant working groups.

a) Correspondence to the Secretary of State

As requested by the Forum at the meeting of 20 October 2020, the Chair wrote to the Secretary of State for Education making representations about the covid-19 costs being borne by school and early years providers in the county and seeking additional DSG resources to help continue to delivery education in Lancashire in a Covid safe environment.

A copy of the letter sent by the Forum Chair is provided at Appendix A (i).

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools also sent similar correspondence.

The Forum has received a very generic reply from the DfE in response to the letter and a copy is also provided in Appendix A (i).

The Forum is asked to consider this correspondence and express any views.

b) Correspondence from Education Mutual

Correspondence has been received from Educational Mutual about the possibility of offering Staff Absence Protection in Lancashire. The correspondence includes an initial letter and some further details in the form of 2 information brochures.

Copies of this information are provided at Appendix A (ii).

The Forum is asked to consider this correspondence and express any views.

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Tel. 01772 795749
Email head@stfch.lancs.sch.uk
Date 29 October 2020

Dear Mr Williamson,

COVID-19 COSTS FOR SCHOOLS

I am writing to you on behalf of the Lancashire Schools Forum, which represents over 600 maintained schools and academies in Lancashire.

I'm sure you would agree that schools have responded admirably to the Government's priority of ensuring that children and young people return to school, for their vital educational progress, for their wellbeing, and for their wider development.

We are confident that schools in the county are providing a high quality education for pupils in a Covid safe environment, but this clearly has cost implications for schools.

Particularly in Lancashire, where current infection rates are such that the county is deemed to be in the Very High Covid Alert Level (Tier 3), it is imperative that Covid guidance and safety protocols are implemented rigorously and self isolation rules are actioned swiftly and comprehensively.

At a recent Schools Forum meeting, colleagues reported on significant increased premises and cleaning cost pressures related to keeping schools open and safe at the current time and, in some cases, providing support for free school meal (FSM) children. In addition, there are substantial extra costs associated with staff absence, both where staff are self isolating themselves, but also when staff need to be absent to look after their own children who have been asked to isolate.

The Forum have strongly supported the principle that staff should continue to be paid for absences when they are caring for their children, but, once options to mitigate the impact of absences have been explored, there are inevitable additional supply and cover costs being borne by schools. This financial pressure will be greatest in Tier 3 areas.

Our estimate of the additional school related Covid-19 costs in Lancashire for 2020/21 is up to circa £20m.

We are aware that the Government allowed schools to bid for 'exceptional costs associated with coronavirus (COVID-19)', but this is only available for costs incurred in the summer term

2020. Additional funding has been targeted at schools for the academic year 2020/22, in the form of a Coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium, but the funding is intended to tackle the impact of lost teaching time on pupils.

We also know that the government have made extra money available to Tier 3 areas, but this is targeted at public health, like the track and trace infrastructure and supporting business that are asked to close. We understand that the funding received to date is insufficient to meet the extra cost and demand led pressures already being faced in Lancashire.

As Secretary of State for Education, you have promoted the principle of getting our children back to school from September 2020 as a vital part of our national recovery from the Covid-19 outbreak. You have personally stated that our children's futures depend on it.

In such circumstances, we would urge you to ensure that there is additional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding made available to Lancashire schools and beyond to enable schools to deliver on this essential priority in a Covid safe environment.

To meet the statutory requirements to provide sufficient childcare for working parents, we are reliant on sustaining our early years provision and we would also ask that you acknowledge the crucial role played by early years providers in allowing key workers with young children to attend work and contribute to the Covid effort, by recognising and supporting the additional costs faced by these settings.

We look forward to your response.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shaun Jukes', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Shaun Jukes
Chair, Lancashire Schools Forum

From: ACCOUNT, Unmonitored <Unmonitored.ACCOUNT@education.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 November 2020 16:37
To: Schools Forum <schoolsforum@lancashire.gov.uk>
Subject: Department for Education Correspondence Reference 2020-0061231 CRM:0463776

Dear Customer

Thank you for your email about Coronavirus (COVID-19).

As I am sure you will appreciate, since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the UK, the department has received unprecedented levels of correspondence. I would like to take this opportunity to apologise that we have been unable to respond to your query as quickly or as personally as we would have hoped.

We understand that this has been a difficult time for many people and that the COVID-19 pandemic has created circumstances no one could have ever imagined or wished for.

We are also aware that people's circumstances and the guidance may have changed since you wrote to us, therefore we hope you understand that we want to signpost you to the latest guidance as quickly as possible.

The government has published comprehensive guidance for parents, teachers, school leaders, carers and students. It covers a wide range of topics and is under constant review. All of the most up to date information on education and childcare can be found online at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>.

For any future updates, please keep checking our website.

If you are unable to find an answer to your enquiry, the department has set up a dedicated helpline for COVID-19 related education issues. Lines are open Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm, and 10am to 6pm at weekends. They can be contacted on 0800 046 8687.

Thank you for writing to the department.

Department for Education



Georgia White
Education Mutual
Hawthorn House
Southwell Road West
Mansfield
NG21 0HJ
18/11/2020

School Finance Team
Lancashire LEA
Lancashire
PR1 8XJ

Dear School Finance Team ,

I recently wrote to the Freedom of Information team requesting whether the local authority provided a staff absence insurance scheme for schools and if so, more information on the scheme.

After finding out you do provide a scheme for schools, I wanted to contact you to ask if there is anyway Education Mutual can provide assistance where possible. We have been approached by numerous local authorities asking us to take over their schemes as they unfortunately sometimes run at a loss and find themselves asking schools to pay more or are quite happy to pass the administration over. The mutual has a stop loss insurance in place where if there is more money being paid out then what is coming in (which is highly doubtful), this would kick in to pay claims and we would never ask schools to contribute more. We are also in a better position with the mutual being national rather than local.

Education Mutual is a non-profit alternative to staff absence insurance that was set up by a group of schools, for the benefit of schools. We do not make money for shareholders or stakeholders and schools don't pay insurance premium tax, so in comparison to a commercial insurance company there are significant savings.

Because of our non-profit ethos, any surplus funds at year-end are returned to our members (schools get to vote on a range of benefits – refund, money off next year, enhanced benefits). Since our launch in 2018, we have quickly become the 2nd largest provider in the UK and recently we received an exclusive recommendation from the DFE as the best provider available to schools.

Education Mutual

Hawthorn House, Ransom Wood Business Park,
Southwell Road West, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG21 0HJ.

www.educationmutual.co.uk | 01623 287840

The Education Mutual Limited. Registered Office: 20 Gracechurch Street, London, EC3V 0AF.
Registered in England Number: 11446659



All members of the mutual have access to a range of healthcare & wellbeing services which comes included in each membership. These are:

- Physiotherapy
- Counselling
- Private Medical Procedures
- Nurse support Services
- Incident Support Services
- 24hr GP helpline & Prescriptions
- Mental Health First Aid Training

I was hoping we could arrange a call or meeting to discuss how we could potentially work together.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me via email (georgia@educationmutual.co.uk) or phone (01623 287840).

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

Georgia White
Membership Advocate

Education Mutual

Education Mutual

Hawthorn House, Ransom Wood Business Park,
Southwell Road West, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG21 OHJ.

www.educationmutual.co.uk | 01623 287840

The Education Mutual Limited. Registered Office: 20 Gracechurch Street, London, EC3V 0AF.
Registered in England Number: 11446659



Education
Mutual

Staff Absence Protection

Become a member of the UK's only
Staff Absence Protection Mutual for schools

We're Different

Created by schools, for schools

What is a mutual?

This is not an insurance policy. We do not make money for investors, shareholders or pay sales commissions. Education Mutual is a tax efficient way of resourcing your staff absence protection and caring for employee health and well-being. All members pay their contributions into the mutual which is used to pay absence claims and support the healthcare of school employees.

The mutual philosophy is built on a sense of ownership, belonging and having a say and trusting those sharing a very similar journey. As a mutual is owned by you, their members (schools and academies), there is no obligation to shareholders, a mutual is free to focus entirely upon their customers' needs.

From a regulatory perspective a discretionary mutual is significantly lower cost to run, whilst for policyholders, cover is not subject to Insurance Premium Tax (which is currently levied at 12% of premiums on insurance contracts).

As well as being less costly to run than a traditional insurer, a prominent feature of Education Mutual is that the premiums paid by members creates a pool of member funds. This may be drawn on to permit profit-sharing across members, or to support a short-term adverse claims experience.

Being a discretionary mutual we do not need to be regulated by the FCA. We are a member of AFM, the Association of Financial Mutual's to ensure we follow correct corporate governance.

10 Reasons why your school should become a member of Education Mutual

• No profits for shareholders	*Yes AGM every year
• No insurance taxes	*Yes Surplus funds utilised
• No profit share bonuses	*Yes Run by schools for schools
• No broker commission	*Yes Election of EM Directors
• Protection not profit	*Yes Your say on improved services

Security

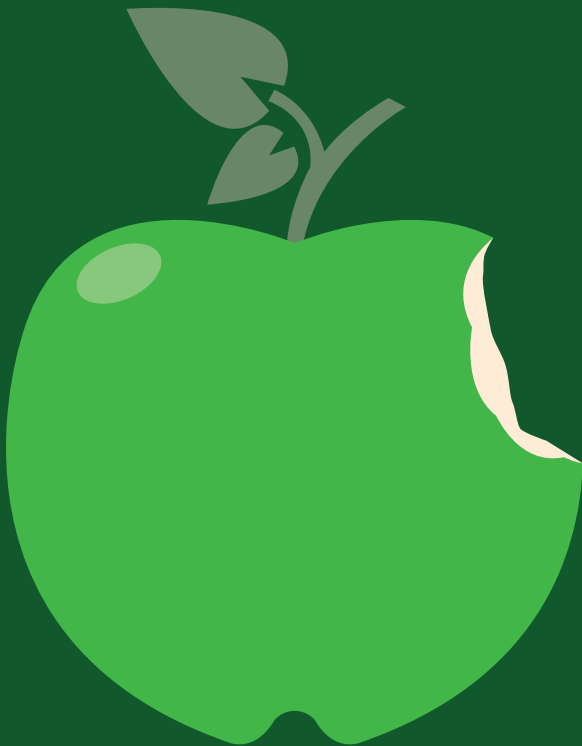
Members will always have valid claims paid. The mutual protects itself with an insurance policy to prevent you ever being asked for further contributions or facing a cut in benefits which was the risk in the local authority pool schemes.



Chairman Nick Hurn OBE
CEO of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust

Who's taking the bigger bite?

Education Mutual



Low running costs and surplus remains in education

Where your money goes:

- Administration Cost
- Claims Reimbursement Costs

Commercial Insurance



High running costs and no refunds to schools

Where your money goes:

- Broker Commissions · IPT · Profit Share
- Fees · Share Holder Dividends
- Claims Payments Costs



We're Supportive

Our support services are targeted on those areas of absence and illness that we feel we can offer the most support to make a difference to the lives of staff and your budget. We have avoided the periphery of services that offer very little in support or impact upon absence yet still have a substantial financial cost. Instead, we have focussed on:

Physiotherapy / MSK Services

With waiting times for NHS services on the increase, there are often lengthy delays in people receiving vital treatment which in turn can prolong their absence from work. Our nationwide network of physiotherapists provides timely, effective and efficient therapy for muscular skeletal problems. Delivered both on a face to face basis and remotely via video link and support. These can be accessed at anytime, providing a preventative route suited to those taking a proactive approach to their healthcare.

Major Incident Support – New for 2020

Following a major incident in school Education Mutual support their member schools with;

- £2000 school stress counselling package for both staff and pupils
- £1500 benefit for immediate supply cover
- £1000 financial assistance for advertising and recruitment
- £500 HR advice and support

Mental Health Services

One in four of us experience a mental health problem during our lives and one in six of us are affected every year by common mental health issues. Our service gives early access to clinical assessment, with every referral receiving a clinical triage determining the most suitable evidence-based treatment pathway for your employee. Treatment is then fast tracked via our nationwide network of highly qualified therapists, offering treatment options such as online programmes, secure video conferencing, and face to face therapy.

Mental Health First Aider – New for 2020

The 1-day certificated Mental Health First Aid course will give delegates a greater awareness of mental health, allowing them to detect early symptoms of common mental illnesses and the skills to support their own and others' positive wellbeing.



Nurse Support Service

Our service is staffed by experienced registered nurses, who not only understand the physical, mental and emotional needs of those affected by an accident, serious illness or emotional trauma but who also are accustomed to listening, caring and empathically supporting an individual with their issues.

Nurse advisors, take a very person centred approach, focusing on an individual's specific needs; helping them to understand their own situation and matching needs to the most suitable healthcare and support services. Support and advice might include such situations as helping with coping strategies post bereavement; clinical advice; help in planning post-accident and illness recovery (minor and complex); assistance in navigating the NHS e-referral system and signposting in respect of any surgical and diagnostic needs; referrals to treatment services.

Nurses will provide help and support to people suffering from, living with, or recovering from:

- Bereavement from loss of a loved one.
- Cancer.
- Cardiac conditions.
- Lung conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and emphysema.
- Medical trauma, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and heart attacks. mental health problems, such as addictions, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, stress and obsessive disorders.
- Motor neurone disease.
- Orthopaedic conditions, including injuries to the limbs, hips and spine.
- Multiple sclerosis.
- Parkinson's disease.
- Stroke.
- Other life-limiting or life-changing conditions.

24/7 GP Helpline and Prescription Service – New for 2020

Designed to be inclusive for every staff member, our service gives remote unlimited access to 24/7 private GPs.

Our service gives individuals the flexibility to have a consultation with a GP in the comfort of their own home or at their place of work. Over the phone or through a video consultation, the choice is theirs. They will receive unlimited advice and reassurance, and can receive a diagnosis whenever they need it, wherever they are.

- Private Prescriptions - During a call or online consultation should one of our doctors feel the individual would benefit from prescription medication, they can arrange and authorise private prescription medication. Doctors follow GMC best practice guidelines on remote prescribing and use a unique electronic prescription service for accuracy and safety.
- Open referrals and Fit notes – As with remote prescribing should one of our doctors consider an individual's condition requires further investigation or treatment they can issue a private open referral letter. Or, if necessary, they can issue a private fit note.

These will be emailed to the individual and with individual approval, a copy sent to their own NHS GP so as to keep a complete set of records.

Surgical Assistance Program

Often the level of discomfort for staff that are on an NHS waiting list leaves them unable to continue their working duties, causing absence prior to surgery. We believe that it's in the best interest of the school and children to have their staff at work and we therefore support schools with fast-tracked private procedures. Procedures will be performed at a private hospital local to the staff member and includes pre and post-surgery treatments and complications.

We're Trusted



National Recognition

Nick Hurn OBE, chairman of Education Mutual, meeting Rt. Hon. Gavin Williamson CBE MP, Secretary of State for Education.



NET LIFELINE FOR CASH-STRAPPED SCHOOLS

A top school business manager has developed a new staff absence cover service that could help save cash-strapped schools thousands of pounds a year.
Trade Grip, who has over a decade of experience at the Retailer Campus in Newcastle upon Tyne, is a founding director of Education Mutual, a not-for-profit organisation that provides an ethical and affordable solution to staff absence cover for schools.
They were motivated to create the new model after growing frustrated with insurance policies charging a premium for a decreasing service.
Shock figures reveal a staggering 57% of teachers have considered leaving the education sector within the past two years because of health pressures.
Education Mutual looks to remedy this by offering staff access to early intervention treatment for a wide range of health issues.
They said: "Schools across the country are being a reliable proportion of their school budget every year to private business profits. This is a huge waste of money.
In contrast, the mutual needs an eighth of the budget as available within the education system with any surplus being left over at the end of the year going back to its members in the form of a bonus.
"Not only does this help to repair the educational pound but it also means more resources are available to look after the health and well-being of staff."
The added "With all members contributing to Education Mutual go directly towards the payment of claims both the other 20% covering running costs. Compared this to private insurance companies, where on average only 10% of paid claims are used to pay out on the payment of claims, with the remaining 40% going towards a combination of sales commission, running costs, fees, and of course profit."
Education Mutual is different from other staff absence cover providers because it is owned by members - schools, colleges, nurseries and other education providers. This means that all of the money that schools contribute to the mutual goes solely towards the payment of claims, covering running costs and nothing else.

Our ethos has gained great support from key education leaders and received positive media and sector attention.



“The Mutual model implemented by Education Mutual results in much lower overheads than typically incurred by private insurance providers. Without the need to pay Insurance Premium Tax or profits for insurers, the savings made are passed on to schools in the form of lower contributions. The cover provided by Education Mutual has been designed by colleagues in our sector, avoiding many of the pitfalls experienced in staff absence insurance. Health care is provided as part of memberships to prevent and reduce the most prevalent causes of absence in education. I am excited about the new mutual concept and feel it represents a real change to our sector for the better. I encourage you to consider Education Mutual in your staff absence cover requirements and to obtain a quotation.”

Steve Kind, ASCL Director of Finance & Operations.



“Herts for Learning has partnered with Education Mutual to provide Hertfordshire schools, colleges, nurseries and education settings with a cost-effective approach to staff absence cover and a number of schools already this year have taken up membership.”



“We’re excited to announce our new partnership with the national staff absence mutual. Educational Mutual provide a supportive, comprehensive staff absence cover that has been created by SBLs to keep monies within the Education sector.”



Education Mutual are pleased to exceed the requirements for Bloom NEPRO3, the only DfE approved framework for procurement. Bloom are experienced in delivering over 5,500 procurement projects and are the appointed procurement specialist for the DfE, NEPO (North East Procurement Organisation and YPO (Yorkshire Procurement Organisation).



“OTSA is delighted to be working in partnership with Education Mutual, a new approach to Staff Absence Protection in school. It was set up by schools for schools, where all end of year surpluses stay in schools. The founding members’ aim is to provide a first-class service and they are determined to give back to society. They are firmly committed to a set of core values which encourage high standards, an empathetic approach and strong professional relationships with schools.”



“We chose Education Mutual because they were founded by school leaders, to give schools a real alternative to traditional providers, and their mutual status means they seek long-term benefits for member schools. We have found their team very professional, highly knowledgeable in their market and extremely considerate of schools’ needs – a pleasure to work alongside.”

You're safe

Once schools started collaboratively supporting each other, the companies profiteering from staff absence insurance made unsettling and inaccurate responses. We'd like to clear these up and give you the reassurance that there are no barriers to prevent you joining the revolution and taking back your money and control.

"They aren't FCA registered"

We don't need to be. A discretionary mutual is not an insurance contract and isn't regulated by the FCA. We discussed our collaborative model and its aims with the FCA prior to launch and received the necessary support and advice to proceed with Education Mutual. For corporate governance and guidance we follow the professional standards of mutuals by the Association of Financial Mutuals which ensures we act correctly. Ultimately, we are responsible to our member schools without any conflict of interests from shareholders or Insurers so don't need rigorous governance as we are acting collaboratively and not looking to seek profit.

"They don't have to pay your claims"

To operate a discretionary mutual and not be classed as an insurance company we have to state that claims are paid at the discretion of the Board. That means that the payment of claims is not contractually guaranteed, otherwise it would be called an insurance contract. Within a mutual organisation, owned by its members, a claimant can certainly expect a sympathetic response to its claims under the benefits and terms it has paid a contributed for. Indeed, as our claims handling process is not as narrowly defined as to whether a claim meets contractual obligations, fairness may play a greater part in assessing the validity of the claim. And because the mutual is owned by its customers there is no conflict of interest, as the **organisation's sole purpose is to serve its members**. Confirmation that we have settled absence claims and supported school employees with healthcare cover was delivered at the members AGM and is widely available. We would be happy to put you in touch with existing member schools so that you can hear it for yourself.

“What if the money runs out?”

This was very important to all involved from the very beginning. Typically, local authority pooling schemes suffer from a restricted claims fund based on their contribution collections. A run on claims could see claims payments reduced or schools asked for greater contributions to subsidise the losses. This does not happen with Education Mutual. The mutual buys an insurance layer of protection with a UK ‘A’ rated Insurer that sits above the mutual fund to ensure that should losses exceed contributions the extra costs would not be borne by the mutual or its member schools.

So, for clarity;

- ✓ You will never be asked for extra contributions
- ✓ You are protected should losses exceed contributions
- ✓ It is protected by a UK ‘A’ rated Insurer

“They are new, will it work, can you trust them?”

We have grown from zero to the third largest provider in under 12 months. We have partnered with organisations that believe in the ethos of our approach and have undertaken their own due diligence before choosing to support us;



Our existing member schools are our biggest advocates and we have a dedicated channel for direct feedback that shows we are delivering on our promises.

“Will they return your surplus?”

Yes, if you decide! Once the accounting and claims year expires the financial position of the mutual will be declared at the next AGM and all member schools will vote and decide on what happens with a fund surplus. You may choose to build reserves within the mutual, give proportional returns to low claiming or all member schools, or reduce contribution levels for the following year. It’s entirely the choice of the member schools. When did your insurance provider give you this much of a say in how things operate, or issue you a refund?

What do our members say?

Over **97%** of members are satisfied with their membership

Over **97%** of members are likely to renew their membership

100% of our members are impressed with our service response time

Over **95%** of members rate our Membership Services Team as wonderful





Bredon Hancock's CE First School

"I had a terrible experience with my previous insurance provider, which made me ultra-cautious about seeking a new provider, believing all companies would behave similarly. How wrong I was! My Education Mutual experience has been brilliant.

Friendly personable staff will answer any ridiculous question I may have and are quick to reassure that there is no hidden agenda. Some of this is because it is a "mutual" company but a lot of it is to do with the staff I have dealt with.

Soon after taking out the insurance I had a new account manager, Dee Linacre. She introduced herself by email, and it was one of the jolliest, friendliest emails I had ever received! She sounded lovely from the start and was very definitely approachable.

I have had conversations by email and over the phone since, about random bits and pieces, and always I have been left feeling that Dee is on my side and will help me with any aspect of our insurance policy.

I can't thank Education Mutual, and especially Dee, enough for taking a great weight off my shoulders."

Melanie Millar, Head Teacher, Bredon Hancock's CE First School



Waterloo Primary School

"I would like to take the opportunity to explain how satisfied we have felt since we became part of Education Mutual.

Education Mutual states that, like us, those who use their services are members, not customers; and this is exactly how we feel. As members, we feel we are able to make contributions to the development of future products as well as reap the benefits of savings which are made explicitly clear. Since joining Education Mutual, our school has saved between £5,000 and £10,000. Budgets in school are tight and whilst not wishing to compromise service for the sake of savings, seeking best value which is also ethical is always at the heart of financial decision making.

I am a headteacher, not a banker, not an accountant and I trust Education Mutual implicitly largely due to the Clarity and quality of documentation, documents which are designed to help make a decision, not cause confusion. From the outset, Education Mutual have demonstrated how they like to conduct business, with honesty and integrity and I cannot fault the service we have received to-date."


Mark Hamblett, Principal, Waterloo Primary Academy



Hodge Clough Primary School

"Jordan never fails to provide an efficient, friendly and reliable service to the school. He always responds promptly and solves any queries or problems we may have. He goes the extra mile to ensure that any processes are as easy as possible for us and invests his time in ensuring good customer relations. I feel that whatever the query, big or small, Jordan is at the end of the phone to help with any concerns."

Sandra Taylor, School Business Manager, Hodge Clough Primary School



Education Mutual, Hawthorn House,
Ransom Wood Business Park, Mansfield,
Nottinghamshire, NG21 OHJ.

learnmore@educationmutual.co.uk
01623 287840

For an immediate quote, complete our online form
www.educationmutual.co.uk



Education Mutual Healthcare

Support, Prevention & Rehabilitation



Health & Wellness Services

NEW FOR 2020

Major Incident Support

Following a major incident in school Education Mutual support their member schools with;

- £2000 school stress counselling package for both staff and pupils
- £1500 benefit for immediate supply cover
- £1000 financial assistance for advertising and recruitment
- £500 HR advice and support

Mental Health First Aider

A certificated Mental Health First Aid course will give delegates a greater awareness of mental health, allowing them to detect early symptoms of common mental illnesses and the skills to support their own and others' positive wellbeing.



Mental Health Services

One in four of us experience a mental health problem during our lives and one in six of us are affected every year by common mental health issues. Our service gives early access to clinical assessment, with every referral receiving a clinical triage determining the most suitable evidencebased treatment pathway for your employee. Treatment is then fast tracked via our nationwide network of highly qualified therapists, offering treatment options such as online programmes, secure video conferencing, and face to face therapy.



24/7 GP Helpline and Prescription Service

Designed to be inclusive for every staff member our service gives remote unlimited access to 24/7 private GPs.

Our service gives individuals the flexibility to have a consultation with a GP in the comfort of their own home or at their place of work. Over the phone or through a video consultation, the choice is theirs. They will receive unlimited advice and reassurance, and can receive a diagnosis whenever they need it, wherever they are.

Private Prescriptions - During a call or online consultation should one of our doctors feel the individual would benefit from prescription medication, they can arrange and authorise private prescription medication. Doctors follow GMC best practice guidelines on remote prescribing and use a unique electronic prescription service for accuracy and safety.

Open referrals and Fit notes - As with remote prescribing should one of our doctors consider an individual's condition requires further investigation or treatment they can issue a private open referral letter. Or, if necessary, they can issue a private fit note. These will be emailed to the individual and with individual approval, a copy sent to their own NHS.



Nurse Support Service

Our service is staffed by experienced registered nurses, who not only understand the physical, mental and emotional needs of those affected by an accident, serious illness or emotional trauma but who also are accustomed to listening, caring and empathically supporting an individual with their issues.

Nurse advisors, take a very person centred approach, focusing on an individual's specific needs; helping them to understand their own situation and matching needs to the most suitable healthcare and support services.

Support and advice might include such situations as helping with coping strategies post bereavement;

clinical advice; help in planning post-accident and illness recovery (minor and complex);

assistance in navigating the NHS e-referral system and signposting in respect of any surgical and diagnostic needs; referrals to treatment services.

Menopause Nurse Support Service

Confidential expert advice and support on dealing with Menopause which effects around 13 million women in the U.K with almost half feeling depressed and 1 in 5 taking time off to deal with menopausal symptoms. Our Nurse support service can help you understand the treatment paths and support available to you.

Nurses will provide help and support to people suffering from, living with, or recovering from:

- Bereavement from loss of a loved one
- Cancer
- Cardiac conditions
- Lung conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and emphysema
- Medical trauma, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and heart attacks. mental health problems, such as addictions, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, stress and obsessive disorders
- Motor neurone disease
- Orthopaedic conditions, including injuries to the limbs, hips and spine
- Multiple sclerosis



Call the nurse helpline

0333 1100074

Membership Benefits

Your school has joined Education Mutual to give you access to a range of health care benefits that help support you in the workplace.

The services we offer have been developed from over 20 years of experience working with Schools, Academies and their staff to target the areas where we can make a difference to people's lives.

The benefits for you are;

- You need not be absent from work to access the support
- You can access the services even if your absence condition is not work-related
- All included services are at no cost to you or your employer
- Services are clinician-led and managed by our medical professionals
- For peace of mind all our support services are completely confidential

Care Delivery

Three main support services are available to you through our nationwide network of regulated medical practitioners;



Physiotherapy/MSK Services

Sessions are available via our network of physiotherapists. We provide timely, effective therapy for muscular skeletal problems, both on face to face basis at a clinic local to you, and remotely via video link.



Mental Health Services

Sessions are accessed via our clinical triage service and highly qualified therapists, offering treatment options such as online programmes, secure video sessions and face to face therapy at a location local to you.



Surgical Assistance Program

Our surgical assistance program involves coordinating private specialist surgical procedures for some of the most common procedures with lengthy waiting lists, as well as providing advice relating to what to do after seeing a specialist. Wherever possible the surgical procedure will be delivered by the same consultant you have previously discussed your operation with, at a private hospital local to you.



Care Access

Our health care support services are accessed via the Education Mutual website. Please apply for treatment and we shall contact you to discuss further.

www.educationmutual.co.uk

Please do not book and/or receive treatment without approval from Education Mutual. We accept no responsibility for costs if you do not follow our guidance.

LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting 12 January 2021

Item No 14

Title: Schools Forum Meeting Arrangements

Appendix A refers

Executive Summary

This report asks the Forum to consider future meeting arrangements.

Recommendations

The Forum is asked to:

- a) Note the report;**
- b) Express any views about the future meeting schedule.**

Members are asked to add the dates to their diaries/calendars.

Background

A draft Forum schedule for the 2021/22 academic year is attached at Appendix A. The schedule has been produced following a similar pattern to that used in 2020/21.

The Forum team have made provisional room bookings for these meetings in The Exchange conference facilities at County Hall, Preston, but these are not shown on the schedule at this stage.

In the immediate future, meetings for the next cycle of Forum meetings, schedule later in the spring term 2020, will continue to be arranged as virtual sessions, and this is allowable under the Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. However, these regulations shall cease to have effect on 1st April 2021.

The DfE have sought feedback about whether a continuation of this discretion allowing Forum's to meet virtually would be welcomed, and we understand that there has been a positive response to the suggestion. It is not yet clear if the DfE will allow virtual schools forum meetings to continue after April 2021, and if so, if it will only be for a period when the pandemic continues to impact on our ability to be in close proximity to our colleagues, or if it would be a longer term change, reflecting a 'new normal'.

The Forum is asked to comment on the schedule and the possibility of continued virtual meetings.

Individual members are asked to add the dates to their diaries/calendars.

Lancashire Schools Forum Meeting Schedule 2021/22

Autumn Term

Meeting	Day	Date	Time	Venue
Schools Forum Induction	Thursday	16-Sep-21	10:00 – 13.00	
Schools Block Working Group	Tuesday	21-Sep-21	10:00 – 13.00	
High Needs Block Working Group	Tuesday	28-Sep-21	10:00 – 13.00	
Early Years Block Working Group	Tuesday	05-Oct-21	13.00 – 16.00	
Lancashire Schools Forum	Tuesday	19-Oct-21	10:00 – 13.00	
Early Years Block Working Group	Tuesday	30-Nov-21	13.00 – 16.00	
High Needs Block Working Group	Thursday	02-Dec-21	10:00 – 13.00	
Schools Block Working Group	Tuesday	07-Dec-21	10:00 – 13.00	

Spring Term

Meeting	Day	Date	Time	Venue
Chairman's Working Group	Tuesday	11-Jan-22	10:00 – 13.00	
Lancashire Schools Forum	Thursday	13-Jan-22	10:00 – 13.00	
High Needs Block Working Group	Tuesday	01-Mar-22	10:00 – 13.00	
Schools Block Working Group	Thursday	03-Mar-22	10:00 – 13.00	
Early Years Block Working Group	Tuesday	08-Mar-22	13.00 – 16.00	
Lancashire Schools Forum	Thursday	17-Mar-22	10:00 – 13.00	

Summer Term

Meeting	Day	Date	Time	Venue
High Needs Block Working Group	Tuesday	14-Jun-22	10:00 – 13.00	
Early Years Block Working Group	Thursday	16-Jun-22	13.00 – 16.00	
Schools Block Working Group	Tuesday	21-Jun-22	10:00 – 13.00	
Lancashire Schools Forum	Tuesday	05-Jul-22	10:00 – 13.00	

All meetings take place at The Exchange, County Hall