

**REDCAR & CLEVELAND SCHOOLS' FORUM****MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HELD ON MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2022 AT 3:00PM  
HELD REMOTELY THROUGH MICROSOFT TEAMS****MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Maintained School Primary Head Teacher:

Miss T Cooper, South Bank Primary School

Special School Representative:

Mr P McLean, Kirkleatham Hall Special School

Maintained School Governor:

Mr M Bloomfield, Belmont and Chaloner Primary Schools (in part)

Academy Representatives:

Mrs A O'Gara, Ironstone Academy Trust, Ms H Dalby, Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, Mr S Glover, Tees Valley Collaborative Trust, Mr M Robson, Northern Education Trust (Chair), Ms S Walker, Skelton Primary School, Mrs A Hill, TVED, Mr R Unthank, Galileo Multi Academy Trust (in part), Mrs C Chadwick, Saltburn Primary School (in part)

Special School Academy Representative:

Miss R Glover, Mo Mowlam Academy (Vice Chair), Mrs S Gunn, KTS Academy

Non Schools Members:

Mr J Faulkner, 16 – 19 Representative, Redcar College

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Mrs E Laird, Directorate Accountant (Children's Services)

Ms C Mahoney, Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Mr R Davisworth

Mrs A Douglas, Clerk to Schools' Forum

*The meeting started at 3pm and the required quorum was met at all times during the meeting.*

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
1.1	Apologies had been submitted in advance from Dr J Hawthorne, Mr G Smith, Mr L Beaumont and Ms R Richardson.	
1.2	Councillor C Morgan had given advance notice that she would be late to join the meeting.	Clerk
<b>2.</b>	<b>NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	No items were declared for consideration under Any Other Business (AOB).	
<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
3.1	Schools' Forum members were given the opportunity to declare any pecuniary interests or other conflicts of interest relating to items on the agenda for the current meeting.	
3.2	The Chair noted that his daughter currently attended a school within the borough and was undergoing the statutory assessment process at the time of the meeting.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
4.1	Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2022 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Having given members an opportunity to highlight any inaccuracies, the minutes were accepted as a true record of proceedings.	
4.2	<p><b>Matters Arising from the minutes</b></p> <p><u>Matter Arising from Item 8.2.7</u></p> <p>In relation to the directory of alternative providers within the South Tees area, Ms Mahoney resolved to ensure that the document had been updated to identify which providers were registered with Ofsted.</p>	Ms Mahoney
4.3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Decision:</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2022 were approved for signature by the Chair as a true record of proceedings.</p> </div>	

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>SEND SPENDING AND RESOURCE PANEL</b>	
5.1	Ms Mahoney informed Schools Forum that an interim SEND Lead had been appointed and would attend the next meeting.	
5.2	Ms Mahoney guided colleagues through the Resource and Support Panel analysis data that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Changes to the referral process, owing to the number of referrals submitted, meant that the panel now only considered referrals for students with no identified special need or on the SEND register.	
5.3	There had been a 25% increase in the number of referrals received in the last academic year. Panel was well represented by primary schools, and more representation was sought from secondary school colleagues. There had been 297 referrals from primary schools, with only three primary schools not submitting referrals this year. All secondary schools had submitted referrals this year, totalling 97 referrals.	
5.4	An overview of changes to panel included an SEMH specialist teacher in role, and the adaptation of paperwork to include Personal Education Plans.	
5.5	The Chair invited comments from colleagues but there were no further questions on this occasion.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>OVERVIEW OF HOW EARLY INTERVENTIONS ARE USED TO PREVENT PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS</b>	
6.1	There were 69 permanent exclusions in the borough during the 2021-22 academic year. The Pupil Referral Unit reached by February 2022, and therefore home tuition was established alongside with weekly visits to pupils from Local Authority (LA) colleagues. The LA would continue to work with schools to avoid exclusions where possible, owing to the detrimental impact on excluded children. However, the LA was mindful that exclusions were appropriate in some cases.	
6.2	Ms Mahoney shared an overview of how the LA was working with schools to prevent further permanent exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A strong Inclusion Team had been established.</li> <li>- Regulated alternative provision was being investigated.</li> <li>- Meetings had been established with Multi-Academy Trusts regarding alternative provision free schools.</li> <li>- Schools were opening and leading on Early Help assessments.</li> </ul> <p><i>Mr R Unthank withdrew from the meeting.</i></p>	

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p>6.3 There had already been 4 permanent exclusions in September 2022. Suspensions for girls were significantly higher last academic year than ever before. There had also been an increase in violent crime. Suspensions had increased to over 5,000 last academic year. Anti-social behaviour hotspots had been identified in the borough, with additional support from police officers allocated to those areas.</p> <p><i>Mr M Bloomfield entered the meeting.</i></p> <p>6.4 Colleagues noted that a reduction in the number of incidents for which schools felt the need to permanently exclude would be ideal. The Chair asked how many permanently excluded students had not reintegrated to a mainstream school if they did not have an ECHP and were not a child in our care. Ms Mahoney noted that the reintegration process last year had been successful, with the support of the Fair Access Protocol. Following a permanent exclusion, if the aim was for the student to be transferred immediately to another mainstream school, the LA would ask the school to consider a managed move instead of the permanent exclusion. Following the meeting, Ms Mahoney confirmed that no students who had been permanently excluded were placed within a mainstream school within 8 weeks.</p> <p><i>Mrs C Chadwick entered the meeting.</i></p>	
<b>7. CONSULTATION REGARDING HIGH NEEDS BLOCK FUNDING TRANSFER</b>	
<p>7.1 Mrs Laird sought the views of Schools' Forum members on the proposal to transfer 0.5% of Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block in the financial year 2023-24 to support the funding of recurring financial pressures facing the High Needs Block which was administered by the LA.</p> <p>7.2 The consultation paper had been shared with all schools in the borough in advance of the meeting, with a request for schools to liaise with their Schools' Forum representative in order that a vote could be held on the proposal during the meeting. In response to a query, Mrs Laird confirmed that 11 responses had been submitted in advance of the meeting. Of those responses, 7 were in favour of the proposal and 4 were not in favour.</p> <p>7.3 Mrs Laird guided colleagues through the information contained in the consultation paper, which included information on the rationale for the request. Since January 2022, the number of EHCPs in the borough had grown by 9.1%. The LA had experienced, over the last three years, a higher-than-average proportion of pupils with EHCPs when compared to neighbouring boroughs. Of note was the level of primary need growth in respect of autistic spectrum condition (ASC) and social, emotional and mental health diagnoses.</p>	

		<b>ACTION</b>
7.4	Mrs Laird provided further information on the national funding formula, a breakdown of funding expected by RCBC, the cumulative deficit, and the current forecast including the level of overspend. Context was provided on the increased demand following a significant rise in permanent exclusions, and an increase in demand for support in early years.	Ms Mahoney
7.5	The potential financial impact on schools of the 0.5% transfer request was discussed. The value of the 0.5% transfer was estimated to be approximately £0.503m, and the transfer would help to alleviate the expected cumulative deficit on the High Needs Block by 31 March 2024.	
7.6	Schools' Forum members sought clarity on the numbers of students being placed out of area and asked if a working party could be established to investigate a collaborative approach to reduce that number. Ms Mahoney confirmed that the authority sought to place students within a 10–15-mile radius where possible. A task and finish group would be established to review the provision in place and Ms Mahoney welcomed representation from Schools' Forum colleagues.	
7.7	Schools' Forum members asked for information on numbers of children placed with independent providers, by their primary need. Ms Mahoney would circulate a breakdown of the figures following the meeting and confirmed that ASC was the primary need.	
7.8	In response to a query regarding the Delivering Better Value programme, Mrs Laird confirmed that LA's in the safety valve phase of the programme had significantly higher deficits than RCBC and it was not envisaged that RCBC would move into the safety valve programme.	
7.9	A vote was taken on the proposal, with School's Forum members using the interactive feature on Microsoft Teams to show their support of the proposal. Schools' Forum members voted in favour of the programme, with ten clear votes in favour (thirteen members with voting rights were present at the time of the vote).	
7.10	RESOLVED to approve the request to transfer 0.5%, if required, from Schools Block Funding to High Needs Funding.	
7.11	Schools' Forum members proposed that in the longer term, consideration be given to a strategy to ensure that children's needs could be met within the local area, which would be more cost effective and in the interests of the child. The Chair noted that the enhanced provision for children with autistic spectrum conditions was working well at Freebrough Academy, and asked if there were any proposals for similar provision within the borough. Ms Mahoney confirmed that the LA was in discussion with another Trust with a view to two of their schools having similar bases within 12-18 months.	
<i>Ms H Dalby withdrew from the meeting.</i>		

		<b>ACTION</b>
7.12	In response to a query regarding the alternative provision at Outwood Academies, Ms Mahoney confirmed that schools could buy into that provision and there were already some students placed there.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	<u>Service Level Agreement (SLA) – Trade Union Facility Time</u>	
	Mrs Laird informed Schools' Forum that a new SLA would be shared on behalf of trade unions. The SLA was not owned by RCBC, this was simply an administrative function performed on behalf of unions. The SLA would offer 4 days of facility time per week instead of 3, at the same price as last year's SLA. The SLA would be circulated following the meeting.	Mrs Laird
<b>9.</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	
9.1	- Ms Mahoney would introduce the new SEND Lead, who would update on progress with exploring different providers	Ms Mahoney
9.2	- Projected pupil numbers for primary school admissions	Ms Mahoney
<b>10.</b>	<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	
10.1	The dates and times of future meetings were <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday 28 November 2022</li> <li>Monday 16 January 2023</li> <li>Monday 26 June 2023</li> </ul>	
10.2	All meetings would be held virtually.	

Meeting closed at 4:20pm.

These minutes have been approved by Schools' Forum as a true record of proceedings:

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REDCAR & CLEVELAND SCHOOLS' FORUM**  
**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2022 AT 3:00PM**  
**HELD REMOTELY THROUGH MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Maintained School Primary Head Teacher:

Special School Representative:

Mr P McLean, Kirkleatham Hall Special School (in part)

Maintained School Governor:

Academy Representatives:

Mr S Glover, Tees Valley Collaborative Trust, Mr M Robson, Northern Education Trust (Chair), Ms S Walker, Skelton Primary School (in part), Mr R Unthank, Galileo Multi Academy Trust, Mrs C Chadwick, Saltburn Primary School (in part)

Special School Academy Representative:

Miss R Glover, Mo Mowlam Academy (Vice Chair), Mrs S Gunn, KTS Academy (in part)

Non Schools Members:

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Ms C Mahoney, Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Ms A Wellings, Lead for SEN

Mrs A Douglas, Clerk to Schools' Forum

*The meeting started at 3pm. The required quorum was met from agenda item 5.4 onwards. No decisions were taken during the period in which the meeting was not quorate.*

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
1.1	Apologies had been submitted in advance from Mike Bloomfield, Alexa O'Gara, Alison Hill, Carole Morgan, Jason Faulkner, Elaine Laird and Ronnette Richardson. Dr Josh Hawthorne had given advance notice that he would be late to join the meeting.	Clerk
1.2	RESOLVED to consent to the absence of the above-named members.	

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	No items were declared for consideration under Any Other Business (AOB).	
<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
3.1	Schools' Forum members were given the opportunity to declare any pecuniary interests or other conflicts of interest relating to items on the agenda for the current meeting.	
3.2	The Chair noted that his daughter currently attended a school within the borough and was undergoing the statutory assessment process at the time of the meeting.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
4.1	Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2022 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Having given members an opportunity to highlight any inaccuracies, the minutes were accepted as a true record of proceedings.	
4.2	<b>Matters Arising from the minutes</b>	
4.2.1	<u>Matter Arising from Item 4.2</u>  An updated Tees Valley directory of providers would be circulated	CM
4.2.2	All other action points were confirmed as having been completed.  <i>Mrs C Chadwick joined the meeting.</i>	
4.3	<b>Decision:</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2022 were approved for signature by the Chair as a true record of proceedings.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>UPDATE ON PROGRESS WITH EXPLORING DIFFERENT PROVIDERS</b>	
5.1	Angela Wellings, Interim Lead for SEN, was introduced to the group. Ms Wellings shared an overview of her professional background for the information of Schools' Forum Members. Following the agreement to transfer 0.5% of Schools Block allocation to the High Needs Block in the financial year 2023-24 to support the funding of recurring financial pressures facing the High Needs Block, there was a need to ensure sufficiency in future, including an increase in specialist provision in the area.	



		<b>ACTION</b>
	<i>Mr P McLean joined the meeting.</i>	
5.2	The local issues in SEN were familiar nationally, with a rise in requests for EHCP assessments and plans, and increased numbers of children being educated outside of the borough. To address these challenges, two initiatives were outlined. The first was the Delivering Better Value programme, which was a Department for Education (DfE) initiative for local authorities (LAs) who were overspent on high needs funding. Pupil level data had been produced on 100 pupils from 5 years ago. The DfE would review their outcomes, and challenge the LA on its decision making, with consideration given to what could have been done differently to avoid high-cost placements. This piece of work would help to provide analysis and prompt questions around decision making.	
5.3	The second piece of work would be conducted in collaboration with Edge Analytics, who would use data to assist the LA with place planning. A plan would be created with the aim of reducing out of borough and independent placements.	
	<i>Mrs S Walker and Mrs S Gunn joined the meeting. The meeting was quorate from this point onwards.</i>	
5.4	The creation of a Task and Finish Group was discussed, and the importance of engaging with secondary providers to ensure adequate provision was noted.	
5.5	Schools' Forum members agreed that it would be useful to be appraised of granular detail to clarify whether there was a commissioning issue. The information should include numbers of children in alternative provision that moved on to out of borough placements. Consideration should be given to how the LA could plan and commission differently to secure lower cost provision. Alternatively, the data could show that too many children were being placed in expensive placements.	Lead for SEN to provide data
5.6	Colleagues agreed that all young people had a right to attend the correct provision. In relation to out of borough placements, the impact of being removed from one's community was considered. Out of borough placements often led to high costs, and poor outcomes. Some young people who were placed out of borough never returned to their communities, resulting in a longer-term impact on social care and housing. Some young people were placed out of borough as there were no places available locally. Care placements could also have an impact.	
5.7	Clarity was sought on how many children were attending out of borough placements as there was no similar provision available locally that could meet their needs. Members also sought information on how many children, who had attended mainstream school, went to an out of borough placement during their secondary education. This information could assist with identifying issues with transition. Ms Wellings confirmed that Edge Analytics would analyse the current cohort, and the piece of work was expected to take approximately 8-10 weeks. If the information was available, it would be presented	Lead for SEN to provide data

		<b>ACTION</b>
	at the next meeting of Schools Forum. Consideration would be given to children's primary and secondary needs, and the dates on which they were last assessed.	
5.8	<p>Schools' Forum members discussed the importance of early identification of needs, from professionals in education and social care, many years before out of area provision was required. A proactive rather than reactive approach would be beneficial to identify gaps in provision. Discussion was held on how mainstream schools tried to maintain pupils when appropriate.</p> <p><i>Mr G Smith and Dr J Hawthorne joined the meeting.</i></p>	
5.9	Schools' Forum members requested information on the number of recent cases that had resulted in tribunal, along with detail of the outcomes. Ms Mahoney confirmed that the majority of tribunals related to placement. A report would be presented at the meeting, detailing numbers of cases won, lost and the impact. Associated costs would be included.	Lead for SEN
5.10	Discussion was held on the challenges of recruiting to various roles within schools. Schools' Forum members agreed that there was a recruitment issue for specialist skills, including teaching assistant (TA) roles. Colleagues noted that it was becoming increasingly difficult for people to commit to TA positions as the salary was not attractive in the context of cost of living increases and travel costs. Thought was given to targeted recruitment in colleges and universities to attract undergraduates to teaching.	
5.11	Schools' Forum members raised concern that special schools' base funding had not increased, and noted that the base funding did not replicate the costs of running the buildings. Ms Mahoney would ask the Finance Manager to provide information at the next meeting on what funding would be released to special schools in addition to base funding.	CM
5.12	Ms Mahoney informed Schools' Forum that information would soon be shared by the LA on the non-statutory commitments that would be reviewed. Colleagues noted caution around changes to school transport for pupils with additional needs and discussed the challenge of setting criteria for who would be eligible for school transport. The infrastructure at some schools would not safely support a sudden increase in parents/carers transporting children to school.	
5.13	Colleagues shared thanks for the valuable opportunity to discuss the most vulnerable learners and agreed that there was a collective responsibility for all young people in the borough.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>PROJECTED PUPIL NUMBERS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS</b>	
6.1	Ms Mahoney guided Schools' Forum members through the position statement that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Detail was provided on the change in schools' published admission numbers, including temporary increases,	

		<b>ACTION</b>
6.2	<p>from 2021-22 to 2024-25. Forecast information indicated that there would be an oversubscription of secondary school places in 2023-24, although caution was noted as year on year actuals were influenced by parental choice and the impact of neighbouring authorities' positions. The LA continued to work with Academy Trusts to secure additional temporary places in 2023-24, and encouraged Trusts to consider providing additional places where possible to ease pressure.</p> <p>As a result of the annual growth in births to 2010-11, the total number of pupils on roll in the borough's primary schools had increased, peaking in Spring 2019, and set to fall thereafter as smaller cohorts of children born after 2010-11 reached primary school age. There was more certainty associated with the projected Reception intake to Spring 2025 as the children had already been born. Later projections contained a higher degree of uncertainty due to the challenges associated with predicting future fertility trends. A growing amount of surplus in primary was anticipated in the coming years and would be monitored on a setting-by-setting basis. Schools' Forum members noted concern around the impact on families if a school were to close, including the cost of transporting children to school.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	Discussion was held on numbers of children that had been reintegrated from Archway following permanent exclusion. Mr Beaumont confirmed that two reintegrations were ongoing, and there had been two successful reintegrations last year. Mr Beaumont worked with the Lead for Inclusion to ensure that reintegration was initiated at the right time.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion on the effectiveness of commissioning strategies related to out of borough placements. Granular information to be provided to facilitate discussion.</li> <li>- Information on what funding would be released from the LA to special schools.</li> <li>- Report on tribunals – numbers and outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>AW</p> <p>CM</p> <p>AW</p>
<b>9.</b>	<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	
9.1	<p>The dates and times of future meetings were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monday 16 January 2023, 3:00pm</li> <li>• Monday 26 June 2023, 3:00pm</li> </ul>	
9.2	All meetings would be held virtually.	

Meeting closed at 4:20pm.

**REDCAR & CLEVELAND SCHOOLS' FORUM**  
**MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23 JANUARY 2023 AT 3:00PM THROUGH MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Pupil Referral Unit Representative:

Mr L Beaumont, Archway (in part)

Special School Representative:

Mr P McLean, Kirkleatham Hall Special School

Academy Representatives:

Mrs C Chadwick, Saltburn Primary School (in part), Mr S Glover, Tees Valley Collaborative Trust, Mrs A Hill, TVED, Mrs A O'Gara, Ironstone Academy Trust, Mr M Robson, Northern Education Trust (Chair), Mr R Unthank, Galileo Multi Academy Trust, Ms S Walker, Skelton Primary School

Special School Academy Representatives:

Miss R Glover, Mo Mowlam Academy (Vice Chair), Mrs S Gunn, KTS Academy

Local Authority Elected Member Representative:

Councillor C Morgan

Trade Unions and Associations Representative:

Mrs R Richardson, NASUWT (in part)

Non School Representatives:

Mr J Faulkner, 16-19 Representative, Redcar College

Dr J Hawthorne, PVI Sector Representative

Non-Members/Officers:

Mrs K Boulton, Corporate Director, Children and Families Directorate

Mrs E Laird, Directorate Accountant

Mrs A Wellings, Lead for SEN

Mr G Smith, Lead for Inclusion

Mrs A Douglas, Clerk to Schools' Forum

The meeting started at 3pm. The required quorum was met at all times.

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
1.1	Apologies had been submitted in advance of the meeting from Clare Mahoney.	
1.2	RESOLVED to consent to the absence of the above-named member.	Clerk
<b>2.</b>	<b>NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	No items were declared for consideration under Any Other Business (AOB).	
<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
3.1	Schools' Forum members were given the opportunity to declare any pecuniary interests or other conflicts of interest relating to items on the agenda for the current meeting.	
3.2	The Chair noted that his daughter currently attended a school within the borough and was undergoing the statutory assessment process at the time of the meeting.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING</b>	
4.1	Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Having given members an opportunity to highlight any inaccuracies, the minutes were accepted as a true record of proceedings.	
4.2	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes</b></p> <p><u>Matter Arising from Item 4.2.1</u></p> <p>The Chair understood that the updated directory of Tees Valley providers had been circulated by Clare Mahoney. The Clerk would contact Schools Forum members to invite them to contact her directly if they had not received a copy. All other action points were confirmed as having been completed.</p>	Clerk
4.3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Decision:</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022 were approved for signature by the Chair as a true record of proceedings.</p> </div>	

		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT 2023-24</b>	
5.1	<p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>Mrs Laird guided Schools' Forum members through the report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The report informed Schools' Forum of the proposed use of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2023-24, by way of an update on the four funding blocks, and sought approvals (where required) for the use of the funding.</p>	
5.2	<p><u>Discussion/Challenge</u></p>	
5.2.1	<p>The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was the main source of government funding for the provision of education services by local authorities, and was divided into four notional blocks – the schools block, the high needs block, the central school services block and the Early Years block. Each of the four blocks was determined by a separate national funding formula (NFF).</p>	
5.2.2	<p>The main change to the NFF to note was the use of the mobility factor, which created additional funding for 8 out of 54 schools at a cost of £39,349. Setting the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) to 0.5% would require £37,305 and would affect 6 schools, with one school gaining £18,929. Applying the factors to the October 2022 census figures had created a funding gap of £206,851 before the 0.5% transfer to High Needs. This would result in the gains made by schools to be capped to 3.51%, affecting 16 primary schools and 2 secondary schools. This was a result of the method of allocation used by DfE being at a higher level of detail.</p> <p><i>Mrs C Chadwick and Mr L Beaumont joined the meeting.</i></p>	
5.2.3	<p>In order to remain as close as possible to the NFF, the proposal was to reduce the growth fund, cap gains at 2.3% and keep the MFG at the highest level of 0.5%. All schools would see per pupils gains of between 0.5% and 2.3%.</p>	
5.2.4	<p>Mrs Laird shared an overview of the information contained within the report on the high needs block, including detail of the allocation for 2023-24 and how it was derived under the NFF.</p> <p><i>Mrs R Richardson joined the meeting.</i></p>	
5.2.5	<p>Information was shared on the Early Years block guidance and allocation. The funding for disadvantaged 2-year-olds would increase from £5.39 to £5.45 in 2023-24. The local authority would fund providers with early years' pupil premium at a national rate of £0.62 per hour per eligible pupil (£0.60 per hour 2022-23) up to a maximum of 570 hours. For 2023-24, the teachers' pay grant and teachers' pension employer contribution grants payable to school-based nursery schools would cease. It was</p>	

		<b>ACTION</b>
	<p>proposed to use a quality supplement to compensate providers for this. In response to a query, Mrs Laird confirmed that this would need to be incorporated for nurseries as well as schools if they employed staff on teachers' pay and conditions.</p>	
5.2.6	Discussion took place on whether Schools' Forum wished to be informed of which schools would be disproportionately affected by the outcome of the recommendations contained in the report. Members agreed that the decision should be made without individual school level information being shared, in order that votes would be made in line with the principle of funding being shared fairly across the borough.	
5.3	<u>Outcomes</u>	
5.3.1	Of the 10 members present with voting rights on the funding formula, 9 members voted in favour of the recommendations contained at item 8 in the report. The vote was cast by way of a virtual 'show of hands' using the functionality on Microsoft Teams.	
5.3.2	Mrs Laird would contact the maintained primary school representative following the meeting, in respect of recommendation 8.2, that mainstream schools would vote to continue with the de-delegation of funding for the free school meals eligibility service.	Mrs Laird
5.3.3	Schools' Forum members thanked Mrs Laird for her offer of facilitating training on school budgets. On behalf of Schools' Forum, the Chair thanked Mrs Laird for her comprehensive report and for the further information shared during the meeting to support discussion and decision making.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>COMMISSIONING STRATEGIES RELATED TO OUT OF BOROUGH PLACEMENTS</b>	
6.1	<p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>At the previous meeting of Schools' Forum, members had requested granular information on the current numbers and associated costs of placements for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in independent placements. Mrs Wellings, Interim Lead for SEN, had circulated a paper in advance of the meeting which included an overview of pupils with EHCPs in the independent sector. Several case studies had been provided, which outlined the complex issues faced by the local authority when seeking appropriate placements for young people. The spreadsheet, also shared in advance of the meeting, contained anonymised information relating to pupils in independent placements, the associated costs, the pupils' primary needs, the provision they were attending and the school they had attended before transferring to the independent sector.</p>	

		<b>ACTION</b>
6.2	<u>Discussion/Challenge</u>	
6.2.1	At the time of the meeting, there were 111 active placements in independent schools funded by Redcar and Cleveland, at a predicted cost of £5.6m. Of those placements, the majority of the young people (49.5%) had social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) as their primary need. 30% of the young people had autistic spectrum conditions, and this was a growing need nationally. 76.5% of young people in independent placements were boys.	
6.2.2	40.5% of the currently active placements had been from secondary mainstream schools, with 15.3% from primary mainstream schools. The paper included information on which national curriculum year the young people were in at the time of their provision changing. In response to a query regarding information on numbers of pupils in independent provision being entitled to free school meals, or eligible for pupil premium funding, Mrs Wellings confirmed that the local authority figures were broadly in line with national averages. Redcar and Cleveland issued a higher-than-average number of EHCPs.	
6.2.3	Detailed case studies had been shared for information, which highlighted the complexity of a range of different scenarios. The purpose of the Delivering Better Value programme was for the Department for Education (DfE) to work with local authorities at a granular level, to review decisions made and consider what provision would be required in future.	
6.2.4	Schools' Forum noted a significant increase in numbers of female students being permanently excluded, and the Headteacher at Archway informed colleagues that he had requested the local authority to conduct a review of trends. Post-16 colleagues noted that the majority of attendance issues in this sector related to female students. Schools' Forum asked for information on how other local authorities were addressing the challenges of rising numbers of EHCPs and exclusions.	
6.2.5	There was a range of good practice elsewhere, including de-delegation of some functions that could be considered. The Delivering Better Value programme was a unique opportunity to collaborate with other local authorities and share learning. A Task and Finish Group could be established to consider high needs, including the impact on young people and the local authority when local schools were unable to offer places.	
6.2.6	Schools' Forum noted the number of young people in independent placements who had moved to that provision within a term of joining a secondary mainstream school. Members discussed the need for additional base places in secondary schools for children who found the transition to secondary education challenging, including following a 25-hour timetable, or adapting to the busy corridors. A nurturing transitional environment in each mainstream school would be beneficial. Mr Unthank noted the impact of the base at Freebrough Academy, and stated that some children would have required places in independent placements without that support. Members agreed that the model should be extended across the borough, and discussed the importance of a proactive rather than a reactive approach to providing the right environment for children, especially during the transition from Year 6 to Year 7. Mrs Boulton noted the importance of addressing unmet needs.	



		<b>ACTION</b>
6.2.7	Schools' Forum discussed the historical local agreement between secondary schools which sought to avoid permanently excluding students. There was a real commitment from mainstream schools which included commissioning placements at Archway, and members discussed whether a similar preventative strategy should be considered.	Lead for SEN
6.2.8	A high needs working group was proposed by Schools' Forum members to progress this area further.	
6.3	<u>Outcomes</u>	
6.3.1	In response to the proposal of creating a high needs working group, a briefing paper would be written, together with a draft constitution and terms of reference. Membership to be confirmed.	
6.3.2	On behalf of Schools' Forum, the Chair thanked Mrs Wellings for facilitating the discussion, and noted the importance of remembering and considering the children behind the data. The Chair thanked colleagues for their contribution to the discussion.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>INFORMATION ON FUNDING TO BE RELEASED FROM THE LA TO SPECIAL SCHOOLS</b>	
7.1	<u>Purpose</u>  Mrs Laird guided Schools' Forum members through the report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The report informed Schools' Forum of funding arrangements for maintained special schools, special academies, pupil referral units and alternative provision academies.	
7.2	<u>Discussion/Challenge</u>	
7.2.1	The DfE used the NFF to allocate funding to local authorities, taking into consideration local factors including the population and deprivation indicators. The funding included a basic entitlement of £4,660 per pupil counted on the January 2022 alternative provision census, and the October 2022 school census. Funding was deducted from the total for those residents who were educated outside of the borough under the import and export adjustments. Total funding was then distributed according to the High Needs Operational Guides which were produced each year.	
7.2.2	Places at special schools were based on £10,000 per place per year regardless of the pupil occupying the place. The tariff appeared to have been set with a view to being £4,000 for the basic pupil cost (in line with mainstream) and £6,000 for specialist support. High needs basic entitlement funding to the local authority was increased by £660 per place in 2022-23 to compensate for the teachers' pay and pensions grants previously received directly from the ESFA for academies. This was	

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p>not reflected in the guidance that still referred to £10,000 per place. The local authority had made the additional £660 payments directly to schools through the monthly instalment.</p>	
<p>7.2.3 The MFG had been included in the grant conditions to protect special schools from increases in costs. For the 2023-24 academic year, the MFG would be 3% from a baseline of 2021-22. The 3% MFG was set to achieve broad equivalence with the MFG for mainstream schools over the same period (considering the schools supplementary grant funding that mainstream schools received in 2022-23). Further details of the MFG calculations were contained within the report. Mrs Laird would discuss the calculations, and the implications for each school, with Headteachers and School Business Managers.</p>	
<p>7.2.4 In 2022-23 the government provided local authorities with a supplementary special schools' grant (SSSG). The SSSG would not continue in 2023-24, as local authorities would be required to pass on 3.4% additional funding. The 3.4% would be applied to the total number of places funded in the 2022-23 academic year, plus the average associated top ups per place funded.</p>	
<p>7.2.5 In response to a query, Mrs Laird confirmed that support bases were not entitled to the additional funding as they already attracted additional funding on the age weighted pupil unit (AWPU) for any pupils in the support base.</p>	
<p>7.3 <u>Outcomes</u></p>	
<p>7.3.1 Schools' Forum noted the increase in the special school minimum funding guarantee to 3%, and the additional funding of 3.4% of the total budget.</p>	
<p>7.3.2 On behalf of Schools' Forum, the Chair thanked Mrs Laird for the information provided, which gave assurances to members.</p>	
<p><b>8. REPORT ON TRIBUNALS</b></p>	
<p>8.1 <u>Purpose</u></p> <p>To share an update, as requested at the previous Schools' Forum meeting, on the tribunals in which the local authority had been, or continued to be, involved with during 2022. Mrs Wellings had circulated a report in advance of the meeting for information.</p>	
<p>8.2 <u>Discussion/Challenge</u></p>	
<p>8.2.1 Mrs Wellings shared an overview of the number of appeals lodged by parents/carers with the SEND tribunal during the 2022 calendar year, and the outcomes from those appeals. The basis on which an appeal could be lodged were outlined, including decisions not to complete an EHC assessment, the decision not to issue an ECHP following assessment, decisions to cease</p>	

		<b>ACTION</b>
	<p>to maintain EHCPs and the content of a plan. The 2014 SEND reforms had placed a greater emphasis on parents/carers seeking independent mediation in advance of submitting appeals. Prior to mediation, the SEN case officers would seek to work closely with families.</p> <p><i>Mrs A O’Gara withdrew from the meeting.</i></p>	
8.2.2	The local authority would always seek, where possible, to reach agreement with parents/carers without progressing to tribunal. Very few tribunals found in favour of the local authority. Resolving issues, to meet a child’s or young person’s needs, was the priority. Parents/carers were always informed of their legal rights, but the local authority would seek to achieve the best outcome for the family without going through what was often a lengthy and stressful process.	
8.3	<p><u>Outcome</u></p> <p>Schools’ Forum noted the information contained within the report.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	No items had been declared for consideration under any other business.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	
	The Chair informed Schools’ Forum that when his term of office as Chair expired, he would not seek reappointment. The election of a new Chair would be an agenda item at the first meeting of the 2023-24 academic year and nominations would be sought in advance of the meeting.	
<b>11.</b>	<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	
	The date and time of the next meeting was Monday 26 June 2023 at 3pm. The meeting would be held virtually.	

Meeting closed at 4:45pm.