

# Public Document Pack

**To: Forum Members:** Richard Blofeld, Patricia Brims, Reverend Mark Bennet, Jeanette Clifford, Fadia Clarke, Paul Dick, Reverend Mary Harwood, Jon Hewitt, Kate House, Peter Hudson, Brian Jenkins, Catherine Morley, Sheilagh Peacock, Derek Peale, Chris Prickett, Chris Prosser, David Ramsden, Clive Rothwell, Graham Spellman, Suzanne Taylor, John Tyzack, Keith Watts, Stacey Williams, Charlotte Wilson

**Councillors:** Dominic Boeck, Mollie Lock

**Officers:** Cathy Burnham, Shannon Coleman-Slaughter, Ian Pearson, Ian Priestley, Claire White

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## SCHOOLS FORUM AGENDA

Monday, 15th June, 2015

5.00 pm in the Shaw House Church Road Newbury

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4	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
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### Items for Decision

6	<b>DSG Outturn 2014/15 and Carry Forward to 2015/16</b> <i>Shannon Coleman-Slaughter, Ian Pearson</i>	19 - 24
7	<b>School Balances 2014/15</b> <i>Claire White</i>	25 - 38

### Items for Discussion

8	<b>Vulnerable Children's Fund - Annual Report for 2014/15</b> <i>Cathy Burnham</i>	39 - 40
9	<b>School Financial Value Standard - Annual Report for 2014/15</b> <i>Ian Priestley</i>	To Follow
10	<b>Trade Union Facilities Time - Annual Report for 2014/15</b>	To Follow

### Items for Information

11	<b>Latest School Forum Operational and Good Practices Guide</b> <i>Claire White</i>	41 - 74
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**Next Meeting: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015, 5pm at Shaw House**

# Agenda Item 2

## Minutes of a Meeting of the Schools Forum

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Shaw House

<b>Present:</b>	Richard Blofeld (arrived item 7)	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Robert Sandilands School
	Patricia Brims	Primary Schools	Governor	Brimpton Primary School
	Jeanette Clifford	Academies	Governor	St Bartholomew's School
	Graham Davies (substitute)	Academies	Deputy Headteacher	Trinity School
	Reverend Mary Harwood		Church of England Representative	Oxford Diocese
	Jackie Hegg (substitute)		Further Education	Newbury College
	Jon Hewitt	Special Schools	Headteacher	The Castle School
	Kate House	Primary Schools	Headteacher	The Ilsleys Primary School
	Peter Hudson	Primary Schools	Governor	Mortimer St John's Infant School
	Brian Jenkins		Early Years PVI	Jubilee Day Nursery
	Catherine Morley	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Theale Primary School
	Sheilagh Peacock	Primary Schools	School Business Manager	The Winchcombe School
	Chris Prickett	Primary Schools	Headteacher	Streatley Primary School
	David Ramsden	Secondary Schools	Headteacher	Little Heath School
	Clive Rothwell	Secondary Schools	Governor	John O'Gaunt School
	Graham Spellman		Roman Catholic Representative	Portsmouth Diocese
	Suzanne Taylor	Nursery Schools	Headteacher	Hungerford Nursery School
	John Tyzack	Primary Schools	Governor	Falkland Primary School
	Keith Watts		Union Representative	
	Stacey Williams	Pupil Referral Units	Headteacher	Reintegration Service
	Councillor Irene Neill		Executive Portfolio for C&YP	
	Cathy Burnham		Social Inclusion Manager	
	Carolynn Loosen		Schools' Forum Clerk	
	Ian Pearson		Head of Education	
	Ian Priestley		Chief Internal Auditor	
	Jane Seymour		SEN Service Manager	
	Avril Allenby		Early Years Manager (from 1 <sup>st</sup> April)	
	Claire White		Schools' Finance Manager	

### 1. APOLOGIES RECEIVED

### Action

Councillor David Allen		Shadow Portfolio Holder for C&YP	
Reverend Mark Bennet	Academies	Governor	Kennet School
Fadia Clarke		FE Representative	Newbury College
Paul Dick	Academies	Headmaster	Kennet School
Derek Peale	Academies	Headteacher	Park House School
Chris Prosser	Secondary Schools	Headteacher	The Downs School
Shannon Coleman-Slaughter		Finance Manager C&YP	
Charlotte Wilson	Academies	Headteacher	Trinity School

## **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING DATED 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015**

The minutes of the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January were approved.

## **3. ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

All the action points that were due for completion from the last meeting have been completed / in progress or are on this meeting's agenda, except for the schools' consultation document on the longer term PRU proposal for delegating the budget from 2016/17 which is not due until the end of the Summer term and will return to the Heads Funding Group and Schools' Forum in September 2015.

## **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Jeanette Clifford declared an interest in item 7 and will abstain from the voting as she is Vice Chair of the charity Makaton, which seeks to see investment protected on items such as the Language and Literacy Centres, support to pre-school children with SEN and support for people with autism.

## **5. MEMBERSHIP**

The vacancy for a Maintained Primary School Headteacher Representative has been filled. Richard Blofeld the Headteacher at Robert Sandilands School was elected by the Primary Heads Forum on 11<sup>th</sup> February.

This will be Carolynn Loosen's final meeting and The Chair thanked her on behalf of all Members for her dedication to the Forum and her work on producing the agenda and getting the minutes out to Members promptly.

## **6. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (DSG) BUDGET 2015/16 – FINAL PROPOSALS**

Claire White presented the report on the DSG 2015/16 and the overall budget proposals.

### **The Schools' Block**

The DSG allocation for 2015/16 has now been fixed by the DfE at £96.093m on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and it has been assumed that there will be no carry forward of funds in this block. It had previously been agreed that the headroom in the Schools' Block would be allocated to the schools' budgets. Whilst the Schools' Forum members accepted that schools will have to pay for more central services they were mindful of the need to balance allocating funding to schools and protecting services. The balance of £3k funding available in this block is due to the final licences fees for 2015/16 being slightly less than estimated.

### **The Early Years Block**

The current allocation from the DfE is based on the 3 and 4 year olds counted in the January 2014 census whereas the final allocation will be based on 5/12 of the January 2015 census and 7/12 on the January 2016 census for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

Our own calculation of the 2015/16 budget allocation has been based on the January 2015 census and also assumes an in year increase in 2 year olds accessing the free entitlement. The estimated allocation is £7.729m including a carry forward of £0.722m and the proposed budget is £7.715m, leaving a balance of £14k funding available.

### **The High Needs Block**

The High Needs Block funding is now fixed at £17.911m assuming a £200k carry forward from 2014/15 as one off funding, although the latest forecast indicates the carry forward may be nearer £300k. The proposed budget is £18.951m, £1.040m in excess of the funding available. Savings totalling £835k have been proposed, still leaving a shortfall of £205k.

The net position (after the proposed savings) is a shortfall of £187k.

Following detailed consideration of agenda items 7, 8 and 9 the decisions were:

**DECISION: The Early Years budget was agreed, plus the £10k proposed saving in SEN Pre- School Funding will now be funded from the Early Years Block funding instead of being a cut from the High Needs Block.**

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed all the High Needs savings EXCEPT for the proposed Language and Literacy Unit (LAL) saving of £67,300.**

**DECISION: The shortfall across the three funding blocks of £264k (after deducting the LAL proposed saving and SEN pre-school saving) will be met from any additional one-off under spend from 2014/15 which will be known once the annual accounts have been closed. If there is still a shortfall the assumption is that there will be in-year savings, though this will be closely monitored.**

It was noted that use of approximately £464k of one off funding on High Needs services in 2015/16 will require further savings to be found from this block in 2016/17.

## **7. HIGH NEEDS BUDGET PROPOSALS 2015/16**

Jane Seymour and Cathy Burnham presented the report on the High Needs budget proposals 2015/16.

The High Needs Block DSG 2015/16 funding is £17.911m and the proposed

budget is £18.951m before the proposed savings which means there is a shortfall of £1.040m. There has been no increase in funding yet there is a growth in demand for statutory provision.

The report contained proposed savings of £835k to the High Needs budget 2015/16.

The members asked whether the statutory services had been reviewed. Jane Seymour confirmed that this had already been done as the shortfall was £1.9m in the Schools' Forum papers of 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

The proposed savings are:

Language & Literacy Centres	£67k
Specialist Inclusion Support Service	£36k
SEN Pre School Children	£10k
Cognition & Learning Team	£80k
Equipment for SEN pupils	£13k
Early Intervention	£19k
Medical Support	£5k
PRU Outreach	£80k
Home Tuition	£29k
Vulnerable Children	£20k
Pupil Referral Units (see item 8 on the agenda)	£476k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£835k</b>

#### Language & Literacy Centres

The possible saving of £67,300 would be achieved by closing one of the Language and Literacy Centres. This proposal has been discussed widely both within the HFG and with the Headteachers they represent. The service is highly regarded providing invaluable outreach services and early intervention; it is also currently oversubscribed. John Tyzack read a letter from Antony Gallagher, Headteacher at Burghfield St Mary's Primary School in support of the LAL's and the impact it would have on his school if the Theale Primary School LAL were closed. An opportunity may have presented itself to enable this saving but a closure of one of the centres would have widespread impact on helping children with dyslexia. Cutting lower level intervention support would lead to an increase in pupils requiring special placements in the future as dyslexia teachers are a costly and difficult service for schools to access individually. If the number of LALs were reduced to one the travelling distances involved would make it logistically and financially impractical.

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum did not agree the proposed saving of £67,300 by closing one of the Language and Literacy Centres.**

#### Specialist Inclusion Support Service

The possible saving of £36,650 from SISS which provides outreach support

from the special schools to the mainstream schools could either be achieved by reducing the level of service or asking schools to pay. However following meetings with the special schools the special schools have stated that they would be willing to continue funding the service from their own budget if the central funding needed to be withdrawn. This proposal means that the service can continue at its current level and remain free at point of use for the mainstream schools.

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £36,650 in SISS as the service will be funded by the special schools.**

#### SEN Pre School Children

The possible saving of £10,000 would be achieved by reducing the level of the service providing support to enable children with SEN to access non maintained and voluntary pre- school settings. The Heads Funding Group recommended that the alternative to reducing this service, which will eventually impact on the schools, is for the funding to come from the Early Years funding block, which has a large under spend this year instead of the High Needs block. Claire White confirmed that the regulations allow this to be funded out of the Early Years block. Graham Spellman asked why the entire budget could not be funded from the Early Years Block instead of just the £10k saving. The response was that it could have been but the recommendation was to confine the transfer between blocks to the saving required.

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed that £10,000 of the SEN Pre-School Children budget will be funded from the Early Years funding block.**

#### Cognition and Learning Team

This service is currently free at the point of delivery and supports schools in relation to SEN provision and practice. The saving of £80,000 could be achieved by charging schools for certain services such as assessments and setting an income target.

Keith Watts asked whether a model for charging has been produced and whether the £80k was achievable. Jane Seymour stated that some work had been done and that the £80k was based on a notional cost for assessments but the charging had not been worked out in detail.

**ACTION: Consultation between the Cognition and Learning Team and schools regarding what services are charged for and the costs.**

J. Seymour

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £80,000 in the Cognition and Learning Team budget.**

#### Equipment for SEN Pupils

The saving of £13,000 could be achieved if equipment is only purchased for pupils attending mainstream schools and resource units; special schools would fund these items from their own budgets. The Special Schools representative, Jon Hewitt, confirmed that the special schools equipment costs that were funded centrally would now come from the special schools own budgets.

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £13,000 in the equipment for SEN pupils' budget.**

#### Early Intervention

The saving of £19,300 could be achieved if this funding for the Early Years Language Project was ceased. The project is not a statutory provision and has been largely replaced by ECAT (Every Child A Talker).

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £19,300 in the early intervention budget.**

#### Medical Support

The saving of £5,000 could be achieved by schools absorbing the cost. There were no requests for funding from this budget last year.

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £5,000 in the medical support budget.**

#### PRU Outreach

The possible saving of £80,000 in the PRU Outreach budget 2015/16 could be achieved by reducing staffing and hence the number of outreach sessions pupils receive on re-entering mainstream school. More of the support would need to come from the school itself either directly or by purchasing the additional service and there is a risk that this would lead to more pupil exclusions. The remaining £117k budget could be incorporated in the Reintegration Service base budget and used flexibly by RS to support outreach pupils when they are not at full capacity although Stacey Williams, the RS Headteacher, doubted that this would lead to increased flexibility. Although the Schools' Forum agreed in principal there was concern regarding the level of additional information and a review at the end of the Summer term was requested.

**ACTION: Review the PRU Outreach Budget at the July meeting of the Schools' Forum**

C. Burnham

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £80,000 in the PRU outreach budget.**

#### Home Tuition

Home tuition is a statutory service and there is a possible pressure if the budget is cut by £28,500 because the service must be provided if a child cannot attend school. The budget in 2014/15 was £282k and the proposed budget 2015/16 is £300k including the saving. This is a volatile budget as it is needs led. All schools have a virtual learning environment (VLE) and there are e-learning packages which could be made better use of to support home tuition. It was suggested that a strategic plan was required which the service and the schools would participate in, but it was acknowledged that this was more likely to impact on the budget 2016/17. Members felt that insufficient additional analysis had been provided and a review at the end of the Summer term was required.



**ACTION: Review the Home Tuition budget at the July meeting of the Schools' Forum**

C. Burnham

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £28,500 in the home tuition budget.**

Vulnerable Children

The possible saving £20,000 could be achieved by tightening the funding criteria.

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the proposed saving of £20,000 in the vulnerable children budget.**

Engaging Potential

Members asked why there were no proposed savings against the £540k Engaging Potential budget. Engaging Potential is a commissioned statutory service providing alternative education packages for 14 KS4 young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties statements whose needs cannot be met in any other provision. The current contract is due for renewal in August 2015 and it may be possible for a lower price to be negotiated. However Jane Seymour pointed out that this was set up to reduce out of county costs and the annual £39k per place is good value compared to the £70k per annum for an out of county placement.

**ACTION: Progress/impact on all the savings and the Engaging Potential tender are to be reviewed at the end of the Summer term.**

J. Seymour

## **8. PRU BUDGET PROPOSALS 2015/16**

Cathy Burnham presented the report on the Pupil Referral Units budget proposals 2015/16.

Currently there are four funding bands which are based on the pupil's needs and the staffing ratio requirement. For pupils in the Reintegration Service (RS) primary schools pay 50% of the lowest band for a maximum of 12 weeks and secondary schools pay 100% of the lowest band but for a maximum of 6 weeks. In both primary and secondary the difference between the payment by the school and the band is paid by the High Needs Block.

Where a pupil is in the KS4 Alternative Curriculum (AC) the school pays £1,500 a term, which is the equivalent of the AWPU, for a maximum of 2 years and the High Needs Block pays the difference between the AWPU and the actual band.

The current model was introduced in 2013/14 when the High Needs Block was under spending. The effect on the High Needs Block 2014/15 is a forecast over spend of £410k in 2014/15 in PRU top up funding and for this pressure to remain in 2015/16.

In the short term it is proposed that in the financial year 2015/16 a single band is used. The new daily rate will be £103.25. This is based on the average of the four current funding bands and amended to reflect the change in place funding from £8,000 to £10,000. By implementing this proposal it is estimated that there will be no increase required to the High Needs PRU top up budget, so a saving of £476,500.

The proposal under consideration assumes that the cost to school and duration of payment remain unchanged. For a pupil entering RS, primary schools would pay the current rate of £38 a day and the LA High Needs Block £65.25 a day for the first 12 weeks after which the LA pays the whole £103.25 through the High Needs Block. Secondary schools would pay the current rate of £76 a day and the LA High Needs Block £27.25 a day for the first 6 weeks after which the LA pays the whole £103.25 through the High Needs Block.

For AC, schools would continue to pay £1,500 per term (£4,500 per year) with the balance (£15,117.50 per year) met by the high needs block.

For all permanent exclusions the LA High needs block will continue to meet the full cost, though the relevant AWPU funding is removed from the school.

Currently SEN top up funding comes out of the PRU top up funding. There will need to be an exceptional rate on a case by case basis.

The long term proposal from 2016/17 is that the PRU top up funding budget be delegated to the schools who directly commission services from the PRUs, alternative providers or develop their own resources.

Both the Reintegration Service and Alternative Curriculum are expected to end 2014/15 with large surplus budgets (£135k and £265k respectively) which includes contingencies for future running costs (RS £120k and AC £115k). Stacey Williams stated that the RS contingency would be absorbed by the reduction in funding and that they will need to be full from September 2015 to break even assuming the expenditure is the same. The PRUs were concerned about what happens if pupils cannot get into RS and then the KS4 pupils cannot get into the AC which could be exacerbated by the savings proposed in the PRU Outreach funding. Stacey asked whether the priority was filling the places to balance the budget; the priority is the pupils.

Stacey felt that the proposal represented the LA position from the high needs funding point of view, but did not look at how much the PRUs needed to function. The members discussed the need for the PRUs to review their operations costs and that they may need to meet pupils' needs in a different way. The challenge is manage the change from a needs led budget to a school budget.

**ACTION: Impact of the revised funding system to be reviewed at the end of the Summer Term.**

C. Burnham

**DECISION:** The Schools' Forum agreed the adoption of a single daily rate of £103.25 for 2015/16 with schools continuing to be charged as per the current (2014/15) payment arrangements with the LA High Needs Block making up the difference.

**DECISION & ACTION:** For the financial year 2016-17 the Schools Forum agreed the proposal that the PRU Top Up budget be delegated to schools that can directly commission services from the PRUs, other alternative providers or develop their own resources. Further work on this proposal will continue in 2015 with Headteachers participation.

C. Burnham

## 9. EARLY YEARS BUDGET PROPOSALS 2015/16

Claire White on behalf of the Early Years Steering Group presented the report on the Early Years funding and budget proposal 2015/16.

The total under spend for 2014/15 is forecast at £722k mainly due to Government funding of two year olds being fixed at a much higher take up level than the actual. This has helped offset the increase in take up of three and four year old places which has not been matched by an increase in DSG funding. In 2015/16 two year old funding will be based on January census data akin to three and four year old funding, which increases the uncertainty for this block of funding. The 2015/16 funding estimate for the purpose of setting the budget has been based on the January 2015 census, and including the carry forward totals £7.729m.

The proposal for 2015/16 is that the formula and funding rates will remain the same as 2014/15, and the overall budget requirement of £7.715m can be met by utilising the carry forward.

The carry forward will only help 2015/16 and the Early Years Steering Group will start work in the Summer term to look at ways of balancing the budget in 2016/17 including reviewing the hourly rates and formula as there are no other funding streams available to this sector. The only way of making savings in the EYB is to reduce the funding rate to providers (which needs to go to consultation with all providers) and it was too late to do this for 15/16.

Suzanne Taylor added that there are about 97 settings in the sector which includes private and state run nurseries that have the challenge of coping with term by term changes to pupil numbers, statutory staff to pupil ratios, many staff paid on minimum wage, and in effect real time funding cuts as there has been no increase in rates since 2010. Given the only option to make savings is to cut the funding rates to providers; time is needed for settings to plan for this.

Volatility will also be an issue with the introduction of the Early Years Pupil Premium Grant (EYPPG) from April 2015. The volatility in pupil numbers means the Early Years Steering group are not sure that the EYPPG funding which will also follow the child will be sufficient and any shortfall will also have to be met from the EYB.

The whole of the early years block is a high risk budget that will need careful review during the year.

The recommendation from the Heads Funding Group was to agree the proposals. The funding of the SEN pre-school proposed saving from the EYB was also discussed and agreed.

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed that the Early Years under spend 2014/15 should remain in the Early Years Block in 2015/16.**

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum agreed the Early Years budget proposals set out in the report with an amendment for the £10k transfer from EYB to HNB for Early Years Pre-School SEN.**

## **10. BALANCE CONTROL SCHEME FOR NURSERY, SPECIAL AND PRU SCHOOLS**

Claire White introduced the report on a Balance Control Scheme for Nursery Schools, Special Schools, and Pupil Referral Units which had been requested by the Schools' Forum for consideration.

Before considering a scheme for these particular schools, it was put to the Forum whether the scheme for primary and secondary schools was now fit for purpose in the current financial climate and whether an alternative and less stringent scheme should be considered which would apply to all schools.

Academies no longer have a claw back scheme and many local authorities no longer operate a scheme for maintained schools. The Schools' Forum members felt that a scheme should be lighter touch and allow schools to make early efficiencies to support their medium term planning rather than encourage them to spend funding to avoid a claw back. The members felt that whilst it was not correct to allow schools to accumulate large balances more autonomy was required and balances should be allowed to be carried forward for good reason and reviewed in conjunction with their budget plan for the next three or four years, although this may mean that the threshold percentage needs increasing. The scheme should also take account of how each type of school is funded.

**DECISION & ACTION: The Schools' Forum agreed to review the whole scheme for all maintained schools, including special schools, nurseries and PRUs. The review should include suggested threshold rates and clarity over the rational for which schools may retain funding, with a view to implementing for year end 31 March 2016.**

C. White

## **11. WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16**

Claire White presented the proposed work programme for 2015/16. The work programme will be updated to include the 2015/16 savings reviews,

PRU budget 2016/17 review, the Early Years budget 2016/17 review, and Balance Control review.

**ACTION: Reviews to be added to the work programme**

C. White

## **12. DSG MONITORING 2014/15 – MONTH 10**

The Schools Block is estimated to under spend by £2k in 2014/15, the Early Years Block is forecasting an under spend of £678k and the High Needs Block is forecast to under spend by £294k

The main pressures within the High Needs Block are £423k against top up budgets and £410k against the PRU top up cost centre. These are being offset against an under spend on the contingency budget.

## **13. UPDATE FROM THE SE DIRECTORS OF CHILDRENS SERVICES GROUP**

Ian Pearson provided a verbal update on the lobbying of Government regarding the level of funding for schools when costs are increasing. The Directors of Children's Services Group and Irene Neill on behalf of West Berkshire Council have written to the Secretary of State for Education but as yet no reply has been received.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### Park House Growth Fund Bid

The Schools' Forum considered the application for Growth Funding from Park House School. Although Park House's pupil numbers had increased in year 7 from 117 in September 2013 to 179 in September 2014, overall the pupil numbers were 773 in 2013 compared with 769 in 2014. The Growth Fund criterion is based on total number of pupils not individual year groups. It was noted by members that if Park House qualified, then most other schools would do so, but this was not the purpose of the growth fund which is to make up for the lag in AWP funding (based on total pupil numbers).

**DECISION: The Schools' Forum unanimously rejected the application as it does not meet the criteria for the growth fund.**

#### CSFAN Introduction to Education Finance Course

There are two places available on the CIPFA Introduction to Education Finance on 26<sup>th</sup> March in London. Claire White invited members of the Schools' Forum to attend.

**ACTION: Place to be booked on the course for Jeanette Clifford.**

**C. White**

Meeting closed 7.10 p.m.

**Date of next meeting: Monday 15th June 2015**  
**Time: 5pm**  
**Venue: Shaw House**

# Agenda Item 3

## ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS SCHOOLS' FORUM MEETINGS 2015/16

Ref No.	Date – Item No.	Action	Officer	Comment / Update
01	19/1/15 - 9	Consult schools on longer term proposals for PRUs	C. Burnham	
02	09/03/15 - 7	Cognition & Learning Team – schools to be consulted on what services are to be charged for and what the cost will be	J. Seymour	
03	09/03/15 - 7	PRU outreach budget – to be reviewed at the July meeting of the SF	C. Burnham	Due at SF 13/7/15
04	09/03/15 - 7	Home Tuition budget – review to be brought to the July meeting of the SF	C. Burnham	Due at SF 13/7/15
05	09/03/15 - 7	Engaging Potential – impact on savings and review of tender to be reported at end of summer Term	J. Seymour	Due at SF 28/9/15
06	09/03/15 - 8	PRU Top Up Rates – impact of the revised rates to be reviewed at end of Summer Term	C. Burnham	Due at SF 28/9/15
07	09/03/15 - 8	Details on the agreed proposal to delegate the PRU top up budget to schools to be reported back to SF	C. Burnham	
08	09/03/15 - 10	Review of Balance Control Scheme for all schools	C. White	Due at SF 13/7/15
09	09/03/15 - 11	Reviews agreed at this meeting to be added to work programme	C. White	Revised work programme for 15/16 attached
10	09/03/15 - AOB	Jeanette Clifford to be booked onto Education Finance course	C. White	Complete

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**Schedule of School's Forum (SF) and Heads Funding Group (HFG)  
Work Programme 2015/16 Financial Year (Revision)**

Meeting	Date	Time	Venue	Items for Consideration/Decision	Lead Officer(s)
SF	15th June 2015 (Monday)	5pm	Shaw House	School Funding Arrangements 2016/17: Overview, Requirements, Timetable (if available by this date) DSG Outturn 2014/15 & carry forward to 2015/16 Review School Balances 2014/15 (including excess surplus balances) School Financial Value Standard - Annual Report for 2014/15 Vulnerable Children's Fund - Annual Report for 2014/15 Trade Union Facilities Time - Annual Report for 2014/15	Claire White Shannon CS & Ian Pearson Claire White Ian Priestley Cathy Burnham Keith Watts
HFG	1st July 2015 (Wednesday)	3.30pm	Shaw House	Consider options for school formula 2016/17 Review de-delegations and Buy Back arrangements for 2016/17 Review School Budgets 2015/16 & Schools in Financial Difficulty Review PRU proposals for 2016/17 Review of the PRU Outreach & Home Tuition budgets Review proposals for changes to scheme for financing schools	Claire White Shannon Coleman-Slaughter Claire White Cathy Burnham Cathy Burnham Claire White
SF	13th July 2015 (Monday)	5pm	Shaw House	Agree proposed formula for 2016/17 to go out to consultation with schools Agree proposal for dedelegations in 2016/17 to go out to consultation with schools Review School Budgets 2015/16 & Schools in Financial Difficulty Review & Agree Schools' Forum Membership & Constitution from September 2015 Agree PRU proposals for 2016/17 to go out to consultation with schools Review of the PRU Outreach and Home Tuition budgets Agree proposals for scheme for financing schools to go out to consultation	Claire White Shannon Coleman-Slaughter Claire White Claire White Cathy Burnham Cathy Burnham Claire White
HFG	16th September 2015 (Wednesday)	3.30pm	Shaw House	Review formula proposals for 2016/17 following school consultation Review de-delegations for 2016/17 following school consultation Review Additional Funding Criteria Review High Needs Places & arrangements for 2016/17 Review Engaging Potential savings and tender Review Scheme for financing Schools following school consultation	Claire White Shannon Coleman-Slaughter Claire White Jane Seymour Jane Seymour Claire White
SF	28th September 2015 (Monday)	5pm	Shaw House	Election of Chair & Vice Chair Agree Formula for 2016/17 to go to Council's Executive for Approval Agree De-delegations for 2016/17 Agree Additional Funding Criteria for 2016/17 Set out High Needs Funding & Arrangements for 2016/17 Review Engaging Potential savings and tender Agree Scheme for Financing Schools DSG Monitoring 2015/16 Month 5	Ian Pearson Claire White Shannon Coleman-Slaughter Claire White Jane Seymour Jane Seymour Claire White Shannon CS & Ian Pearson
HFG	24th November 2015 (Tuesday)	3.30pm	Shaw House	Review of likely DSG Funding for 2016/17 and Draft Budget Review High Needs Budget Proposals for 2016/17 Review PRU Budget Proposals for 2016/17	Claire White Jane Seymour Cathy Burnham

## Work Programme 2015/16 Financial Year (Revision)

Meeting	Date	Time	Venue	Items for Consideration/Decision	Lead Officer(s)
				Update on Schools in Financial Difficulty	Claire White
SF	7th December 2015 (Monday)	5pm	Shaw House	Draft DSG Budget for 2016/17 - Overview Update on High Needs Budget Proposals for 2016/17 Update on Early Years Funding Budget Proposals for 2016/17 Update on PRU Budget Proposals for 2016/17 Update on Schools in Financial Difficulty School Funding Benchmarking Information DSG Monitoring 2015/16 Month 7	Claire White Jane Seymour Avril Allenby Cathy Burnham Claire White Claire White Shannon CS & Ian Pearson
HFG	13th January 2016 (Wednesday)	3.30pm	Shaw House	Review DSG funding for 2016/17 and draft budget Consider school budget and final funding rates for school formula Review High Needs budget proposals Review PRU budget proposals	Claire White & Shannon CS Claire White Jane Seymour Cathy Burnham
SF	25th January 2016 (Monday)	5pm	Shaw House	Overview of DSG funding for 2016/17 and draft budget for 2016/17 Agree final funding rates for School Formula and and agree school budget Review High Needs Budget Proposals Review PRU budget proposals Review Early Years budget proposals Report on funding from Growth Fund and Falling Rolls Fund 2015/16 DSG Monitoring 2015/16 Month 9 (Budgets to schools by 29th January - subject to Approval by EFA)	Claire White & Shannon CS Claire White Jane Seymour Cathy Burnham Avril Allenby Claire White Shannon CS & Ian Pearson
HFG	24th February 2016 (Wednesday)	3.30pm	Shaw House	Review of Final DSG Budget proposal for 2016/17 Review final arrangements for High Needs Review final arrangements for Early Years Review final arrangements for PRUs Agree work programme 2016/17	Claire White & Shannon CS Jane Seymour Avril Allenby Cathy Burnham Claire White
SF	7th March 2016 (Monday)	5pm	Shaw House	Agree Final DSG Budget for 2016/17 Agree final arrangements for High Needs Agree final arrangements for Early Years Agree final arrangements for PRUs DSG Monitoring 2015/16 Month 10 Agree work programme 2016/17	Claire White & Shannon CS Jane Seymour Avril Allenby Cathy Burnham Shannon CS & Ian Pearson Claire White

<b>West Berkshire School's Forum</b>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>DSG Outturn 2014-15 and Carry Forward to 2015/16</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2015</b>
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	<b>Ian Pearson, Shannon Coleman-Slaughter</b>
<b>For Decision</b>	

## 1. Background

1.1 The main source of funding for schools is the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). It is a ring fenced specific grant and can only be used on school/pupil activity.

1.2 The Local Authority is required to use national formula factors but applies local rates to distribute funding to schools.

1.3 Centrally Retained Overspends, unless funded from outside the DSG, are carried forward and top sliced from the following year's DSG allocation. Underspends must be carried forward to support the school's budget in future years.

1.4 The Authority and Schools' Forum are responsible for ensuring that the DSG is deployed correctly, and monitoring of spend against the DSG needs to take place regularly to enable decision making on overspends/underspends and to inform future year budget requirements.

## 2. Year End Position Summary

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Year End Expenditure	(Under) / Over spend	Month Ten Forecast (under) / over spend
Schools Block	64,186,700	64,136,270	63,987,779	-148,491	-2,450
Early Years Block	7,925,250	7,828,920	7,222,828	-606,092	-678,390
High Needs Block	17,180,500	16,503,460	16,158,516	-344,944	-294,010
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>89,292,450</b>	<b>88,468,650</b>	<b>87,369,123</b>	<b>-1,099,527</b>	<b>-974,850</b>
SSRs	720,890	720,890	720,890	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>90,013,340</b>	<b>89,189,540</b>	<b>88,090,013</b>	<b>-1,099,527</b>	<b>-974,850</b>
Grant	-90,013,340	-89,189,540	-88,090,013	1,099,527	974,850
<b>(under) / Over spend</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Change on Month Ten Expenditure Forecast (increase) / decrease</b>					<b>-124,677</b>

2.1 The final year end position is an under spend of £1.09million, this is a £124k increase on the under spend forecast at Month Ten previously reported to School's Forum. Each funding block ended the year in an under spend position.

### 3. Year End Position – Detailed Review by Funding Block

#### The Schools Block

Ref	Cost Centre	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Year End Expenditure	(Under) / Over spend	Month Ten Forecast (under) / over spend
90020	Primary Schools	46,433,670	46,433,670	46,444,102	10,432	0
90025	Secondary Schools	16,621,740	16,621,740	16,632,219	10,479	0
90035	LAC Pupil Premium	0	0	0	0	0
90112	Trade Union Costs Primary	24,960	24,960	13,499	-11,461	0
90117	Trade Union Costs Secondary	11,880	11,880	23,342	11,462	0
90230	Primary Schools in Financial Difficulty	115,470	231,150	112,297	-118,853	0
90235	School Delegated Contingency (Growth Fund)	370,000	203,890	148,341	-55,549	0
90255	Virtual School Service	168,130	168,130	171,766	3,636	0
90349	Behaviour Support	142,060	142,060	161,771	19,711	15,000
90583	CLA/MPA Licences	76,120	76,120	76,119	-1	0
90019	DSG Servicing of Schools' Forum	42,220	42,220	31,563	-10,657	-10,000
90743	Admissions	180,450	180,450	172,760	-7,690	-7,450
<b>Total</b>		<b>64,186,700</b>	<b>64,136,270</b>	<b>63,987,779</b>	<b>-148,491</b>	<b>-2,450</b>
<b>Change on Month Ten Expenditure Forecast (increase) / decrease</b>						<b>-146,041</b>

3.1 The under spend on the School's Block increased by £146k between Month Ten and the yearend. The increase was predominately the result of additional under spend not previously forecast against School's in Financial Difficulty and the Delegated Contingency (which if unspent are carried forward).

3.2 In respect of the de-delegated budgets, Virtual School Service and Behaviour Support Services ended the financial year with over spend equating to 2.2% and 13.9% of the budget respectively. The over spend against the Virtual School Service was the result of additional in year support to pupils. The over spend against the Behaviour Support Service was the result of non achievement of the academy income buy back target. The Trade Union Facilities Time which is split across the Special Costs – Primary and Special Costs – Secondary cost centres, in total ended the year with an on line position.

3.3 Detailed comments on the year end position on a cost centre by cost centre basis are detailed in Appendix A.

3.4 It is recommended that the total under spend on Schools in Financial Difficulty £118,853 and £29,638 of the under spend on contingency for growth fund be carried forward and added to the 2015/16 funds (total £148,491).

### The Early Years Block

Ref	Cost Centre	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Year End Expenditure	(Under) / Over spend	Month Ten Forecast (under) / over
90010	Nursery Schools	809,470	809,470	828,581	19,111	19,270
90017	Early Years Support Team	72,300	72,300	119,624	47,324	-15,600
90018	Expenditure on 2 year olds	1,267,230	1,267,230	531,082	-736,148	-771,660
90036	Early Years Funding for PVI	4,308,760	4,308,760	4,611,588	302,828	322,340
90037	Early Yrs Funding Maintained Sector	1,112,950	1,112,950	1,131,953	19,003	25,470
90051	Early Years Funding - Contingency	354,540	258,210	0	-258,210	-258,210
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,925,250</b>	<b>7,828,920</b>	<b>7,222,828</b>	<b>-606,092</b>	<b>-678,390</b>
<b>Change on Month Ten Expenditure Forecast (increase) / decrease</b>						<b>72,298</b>

3.4 The under spend on the Early Years Block has reduced by £72k from the forecast under spend as reported at Month Ten and the year end. The reduction is predominately the result of IT investment in the Early Years Provider and Two Year Olds Provider Portal paid from the early years support team budget but funded as planned from the two year old trajectory funding.

3.5 The under spend against the Early Years Block was agreed at School's Forum on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015 to be carried forward into the 2015-16 budget in order to maintain the funding rates to providers for 2015/16.

3.6 Detailed comments on the year end position on a cost centre by cost centre basis are detailed in Appendix A.

### The High Needs Block

Ref	Cost Centre	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Year End Expenditure	(Under) / Over spend	Month Ten Forecast (under) / over
Consolidated	Place Funding	4,469,250	4,506,750	4,506,748	-2	0
Consolidated	Top Up Funding	9,434,070	9,441,390	9,827,673	386,283	-423,490
Consolidated	Other SEN Services	1,776,400	1,825,400	1,824,095	-1,305	12,420
90237	Contingency	1,500,780	729,920	0	-729,920	-729,920
<b>Total</b>		<b>17,180,500</b>	<b>16,503,460</b>	<b>16,158,516</b>	<b>-344,944</b>	<b>-294,010</b>
<b>Change on Month Ten Expenditure Forecast (increase) / decrease</b>						<b>-50,934</b>

3.7 The under spend on the High Needs Block increased by £51k from the forecast as reported at Month Ten and the year end. The increase was the result of an increase in the under spend against top up funding.

3.8 In total there was a £386k over spend against top up funding which was offset via a £729k under spend on the Special Needs Delegated Contingency budget. The main areas of pressure within the top up budgets were:

1. Pupil Referral with an over spend of £436k, 36% of the specific Pupil Referral Top Up budget.
2. Academy School Resource Units with an over spend of £124k
3. Special Schools with an over spend of £118k

3.9 In respect of other SEN related services funded from the High Needs Block the main area of pressure identified was Home Tuition with an over spend of £49k. Detailed comments on the year end position on a cost centre by cost centre basis are detailed in Appendix A.

3.10 It is recommended that the under spend of £344,944 in the high needs block is carried forward to support the high needs budget in 2015/16. The budget assumed a £200k carry forward, but was set with a £265k shortfall. This will therefore leave a £120k budget shortfall to be met by assumed underspends in year.

**3.11 To summarise, the recommended use of the carry forward is as follows:**

	Carry Forward £
Primary Schools in Financial Difficulty	118,850
Contingency – growth fund	29,640
Early Years Block – towards funding the budget as set	606,090
High Needs Block – towards funding the budget as set	344,950
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,099,530</b>

#### 4. Budget Changes in Year 2014-15

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	In Year Change
Schools Block	64,186,700	64,136,270	-50,430
Early Years Block	7,925,250	7,828,920	-96,330
High Needs Block	17,180,500	16,503,460	-677,040
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>89,292,450</b>	<b>88,468,650</b>	<b>-823,800</b>

4.1 £823k of budget changes were processed in year with the approval of the School's Forum.

#### Appendices

Appendix A – DSG 2014-15 Year End Position as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015

## Appendix A: Dedicated School's Grant (DSG) 2014-15 Year End

Cost Centre	Description	Original Budget	Net Virements in year	Amended Budget	Actual	Variance	Comments
90020	Primary Schools	46,433,670		46,433,670	46,444,102	10,432	in year rates adjustments
90025	Secondary Schools	16,621,740		16,621,740	16,632,219	10,479	in year rates adjustments
90035	LAC Pupil Premium	0		0	0	0	
90112	Special Costs Primary	24,960		24,960	13,499	-11,461	
90117	Special Costs Secondary	11,880		11,880	23,342	11,462	
90230	Schools in Financial Difficulty	115,470	115,680	231,150	112,297	-118,853	Fund to be carried forward
90235	School Delegated Contingency	370,000	-166,110	203,890	148,341	-55,549	Growth/Falling Rolls Fund not all required in year
90255	Virtual School Service	168,130		168,130	171,766	3,636	Insurance Claim £1k. Additional support required for new pupils.
90349	Behaviour Support - DSG	142,060		142,060	161,771	19,711	Underachieved Academy income target.
90583	CLA/MPA Licences	76,120		76,120	76,119	-1	
90019	DSG Servicing of Schools' Forum	42,220		42,220	31,563	-10,657	Supplies and Services under spend
90743	Admissions	180,450		180,450	172,760	-7,690	Under spend on Consultants Fees for place planning modelling.
<b>Schools Block Total</b>		<b>64,186,700</b>	<b>-50,430</b>	<b>64,136,270</b>	<b>63,987,779</b>	<b>-148,491</b>	
90010	Nursery Schools	809,470		809,470	828,581	19,111	Demand led - Equates to 7 additional children funded
90017	Early Years Support Team	72,300		72,300	119,624	47,324	Investment in IT systems - Early Years Provider portal and 2 year old funding portal
90018	Expenditure on 2 year olds	1,267,230		1,267,230	531,082	-736,148	Actual take up of places (approx 177) significantly lower than Government prediction (approx 384) and the fixed DSG funding provided
90036	Early Years Funding for PVI	4,308,760		4,308,760	4,611,588	302,828	Demand led - Equates to approx 124 additional children funded
90037	Early Yrs Funding Maintained Sector	1,112,950		1,112,950	1,131,953	19,003	Demand led - Equates to 8 additional children funded
90051	Early Years Funding - Contingency	354,540	-96,330	258,210	0	-258,210	partly offsets in year places growth not funded by DSG
<b>Early Years Block Total</b>		<b>7,925,250</b>	<b>-96,330</b>	<b>7,828,920</b>	<b>7,222,828</b>	<b>-606,092</b>	
90026	Academy Schools RU Top Ups	252,610		252,610	377,015	124,405	Demand led
90539	Special Schools - Top Up Funding	2,465,120		2,465,120	2,583,548	118,428	Demand led
90548	Non WBC Special Schools - Top Up Funding	663,900		663,900	720,291	56,391	Demand led
90575	Non LEA Special School (OofA)	889,740		889,740	864,869	-24,871	Demand led
90579	Independent Special School Place & Top Up	1,476,030		1,476,030	1,480,690	4,660	Demand led
90580	Further Education Colleges Top Up	1,345,340		1,345,340	1,063,033	-282,307	Successful negotiation with colleges on the fees for College students.
90617	Resourced Units top up Funding maintained	335,060		335,060	305,713	-29,347	Demand led
90618	Non WBC Resourced Units - Top Up Funding	15,300		15,300	23,922	8,622	Demand led
90621	Mainstream - Top Up Funding maintained	572,830		572,830	518,794	-54,036	Demand led
90622	Mainstream - Top Up Funding Academies	161,940		161,940	183,221	21,281	Demand led
90624	Non WBC Mainstream - Top Up Funding	50,700		50,700	57,388	6,688	Demand led
90625	Pupil Referral Units - Top Up Funding	1,205,500	7,320	1,212,820	1,649,188	436,368	Increase in demand
90237	Special Needs Delegated Contingency	1,500,780	-770,860	729,920	0	-729,920	Contingency to offset increases in demand through year
<b>High Needs Block: Top Up Funding Total</b>		<b>10,934,850</b>	<b>-763,540</b>	<b>10,171,310</b>	<b>9,827,673</b>	<b>-343,637</b>	
90320	Pupil Referral Units	672,000		672,000	672,000	0	
90540	Special Schools	2,860,000	25,000	2,885,000	2,885,000	0	

90555	LAL Funding	134,600		134,600	134,598	-2	
90584	Resourced Units - Place Funding (70)	500,000	12,500	512,500	512,500	0	
90582	PRU Outreach	197,000		197,000	197,000	0	
90585	HN Outreach Special Schools	105,650		105,650	105,650	0	
<b>High Needs Block: Place Funding Total</b>		<b>4,469,250</b>	<b>37,500</b>	<b>4,506,750</b>	<b>4,506,748</b>	<b>-2</b>	
90038	Pupil Premium -	0		0	0	0	
90236	Managed Moves/Exclusions Contingency	0		0	0	0	
90238	SEN Pre School Children	50,210		50,210	50,044	-166	
90240	Applied Behaviour Analysis	138,630		138,630	112,028	-26,602	Change in placement of one student
90280	Special Needs Support Team	318,300		318,300	325,075	6,775	Cars and Supplies and Services
90290	Sensory Impairment	227,440		227,440	225,694	-1,746	Reduced payments to Windsor and Maidenhead
90315	Home Tuition	282,000		282,000	330,593	48,593	Increase in the amount of home tutors to accommodate the number of students.
90565	Equipment For SEN Pupils	38,470		38,470	18,922	-19,548	Fewer requests for equipment received
90577	SEN Commissioned Provision	459,110	49,000	508,110	507,412	-698	Reactive maintenance lower than expected
90830	ASD Teachers	119,950		119,950	118,961	-989	Supplies and Services under spend to fund other Learning Support Services pressures.
90957	Early Intervention	33,510		33,510	35,882	2,372	Employees pressure
90961	Vulnerable Children	80,000		80,000	76,009	-3,991	Earmarked funding not claimed by schools
90965	SEN Inclusion Programme	28,780		28,780	23,476	-5,304	Supplies and Services under spend to fund other Learning Support Services pressures.
<b>High Needs Block: Non Top Up or Place Funding</b>		<b>1,776,400</b>	<b>49,000</b>	<b>1,825,400</b>	<b>1,824,095</b>	<b>-1,305</b>	
<b>High Needs Block Total</b>		<b>17,180,500</b>	<b>-677,040</b>	<b>16,503,460</b>	<b>16,158,516</b>	<b>-344,944</b>	
<b>Total Expenditure across funding bocks</b>		<b>89,292,450</b>	<b>-823,800</b>	<b>88,468,650</b>	<b>87,369,123</b>	<b>-1,099,527</b>	
<b>SUPPORT SERVICE RECHARGES</b>		<b>720,890</b>		<b>720,890</b>	<b>720,890</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL DSG EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>90,013,340</b>	<b>-823,800</b>	<b>89,189,540</b>	<b>88,090,013</b>	<b>-1,099,527</b>	
90030	DSG Grant Account	-90,013,340	823,800	-89,189,540	-88,090,013	1,099,527	Carry forward to 2015/16
<b>NET DSG EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	



<b>West Berkshire Schools' Forum</b>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>School Balances as at 31 March 2015</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2015</b>
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	<b>Claire White</b>
<b>For Decision</b>	

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The schools accounts for 2014/15 have now been closed and the closing balances for each school determined.

1.2 The following table summarises the overall revenue closing balances of West Berkshire Maintained schools compared to the previous year. A detailed breakdown per school is shown in Appendix A.

	As at 31 March 2014 £'000	As at 31 March 2015 £'000	Increase / (decrease) £'000	%
<b>Nursery</b>	76	74	(2)	-2.6
<b>Primary</b>	2,425	2,775	350	+14.4
<b>Secondary</b>	262	(191)	(453)	-172.9
<b>Special</b>	742	635	(107)	-14.4
<b>PRUs</b>	315	729	414	+131.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,820</b>	<b>4,022</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>+5.3</b>

1.3 Although overall balances have slightly increased, there has been a significant decrease in secondary school balances, mainly due to the increase in the deficit at John O' Gaunt School, and a significant increase in the balances held by the PRUs. The two special schools are still holding high balances, and primary school balances have surprisingly gone up.

## 2. Schools Closing in Deficit

2.1 Three schools budgeted a deficit in 2014/15 - John O' Gaunt, Bradfield, and Kintbury. Of these schools, only John O' Gaunt closed with a deficit. Bradfield benefitted from funding from the Schools in Financial Difficulty Fund and also reorganised and managed their budgets well. Kintbury did some restructuring but put other plans on hold (the original budget plan included redundancy costs). In addition to John O' Gaunt, eight other schools closed with a deficit at the end of 2014/15 (compared to four schools at the end of 2013/14 who all closed in surplus this year) – Birch Copse, Burghfield St Marys, John Rankin Infant, John Rankin Junior, Mortimer St Johns, Mrs Blands, St John the Evangelist, and Welford & Wickham.

2.2 The overall position at each of these schools as at 31 March 2015 compared to their previous year end balance and budget for 2014/15 are as follows (note that these figures are for the main school budget only and exclude, for example, unspent balances on pupil premium and sports grant which may bring them into an overall surplus):

	2013/14 Actual Balance £'000	2014/15 Budget £'000	2014/15 Actual Balance £'000	Actual compared to Budget £'000
<b>John O'Gaunt</b>	-161	-535	-605	-70
<b>Bradfield</b>	-1	-75	44	119
<b>Kintbury</b>	51	-25	27	52
<b>Birch copse</b>	102	17	-5	-22
<b>Burghfield St Marys</b>	2	1	-6	-7
<b>John Rankin Infants</b>	42	0	-10	-10
<b>John Rankin Junior</b>	21	0	-19	-19
<b>Mortimer St Johns</b>	11	0	-21	-21
<b>Mrs Blands</b>	38	12	-7	-19
<b>St John the Evangelist</b>	13	0	-18	-18
<b>Welford and Wickham</b>	10	9	-3	-12

2.3 The deficit at John O'Gaunt has continued to grow, and despite suspending year 12 from September 2014, the school still overspent by 13% compared to the deficit set at the beginning of the year. The school continues to be monitored by the Council's Management Board.

2.4 Although Kintbury avoided a deficit in 2014/15 and closed with a large surplus, the school has now set a budget with a small deficit in 2015/16 and is working on its longer term plan.

2.5 All the other schools listed above have planned to clear the deficit in 2015/16 and be back in surplus.

### 3. Schools Closing with an Excess Surplus

3.1 West Berkshire's current Balance Control Mechanism sets a maximum limit for balances on schools' delegated budgets of 8% primary and 5% secondary of the annual budget allocation or £20,000 (whichever is greater). Balances in excess of this limit may be clawed back. Three primary schools have closed with an apparent excess surplus (compared to three last year, none of whom have an excess balance this year). The three schools are Englefield, Inkpen and Lambourn.

3.2 Each school is required to complete a balance return, and if it has an excess surplus to provide an explanation and detailed information regarding use of

the balance. The returns from each school with an excess are attached in Appendix B.

3.3 Although outside the clawback scheme, it should also be noted that the PRUs also closed with significant surpluses, and their explanations are also included in Appendix B.

3.4 Schools should be commended on their continued ability during 2014/15 to monitor and control their budgets despite the continuing reduction in real term funding (i.e. no inflationary increases). At the close of the year there were no excessive/unexplained deficits or excess surpluses to cause significant concern, other than the continuing concerns at John O' Gaunt school.

**For Decision:** Schools' Forum to decide whether to accept each of the three school's explanations for and use of their excess balance, or to refer any to the next Heads Funding Group to hear from the school, review and make a recommendation back to the Schools' Forum.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – School Balances Summary as at 31 March 2015

Appendix B – Balance Control Returns from Schools with an Excess Surplus Balance

# Appendix A

School Balances Summary (Net Revenue Balance only) Exclude Capital and Community Focused	Closing Balance 31/03/2014	Closing Balance 31/03/2015	Change in Balance	Budget Share 2015/16	Balance as % of Budget	Percentage Rate Allowed	Upper Threshold	Excess Balance	Less PPG & PE Grant c/f	Less Other c/f allowed	Final Excess Balance
<b>NURSERY SCHOOLS</b>											
Hungerford Nursery School Centre for Children and Families	24,974	21,723	-3,252	483,703	4.49%	10.00%	48,370	0	0		
Victoria Park Nursery School	50,788	52,372	1,584	530,241	9.88%	10.00%	53,024	0	0		
<b>TOTAL NURSERY SCHOOLS</b>	<b>75,762</b>	<b>74,095</b>	<b>-1,667</b>	<b>1,013,944</b>	<b>7.31%</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PRIMARY SCHOOLS</b>											
Aldermaston Church of England Primary School	49,881	63,473	13,592	678,121	9.36%	8.00%	54,250	9,223	4,758	12,490	0
Basildon Church of England Primary School	18,238	22,725	4,487	557,919	4.07%	8.00%	44,634	0	7,964		
Beedon Church of England (Controlled) Primary School	2,795	14,646	11,851	284,335	5.15%	8.00%	22,747	0	3,008		
Beenham Primary School	-13,229	3,590	16,819	469,833	0.76%	8.00%	37,587	0	632		
Birch Copse Primary School	104,463	29,561	-74,902	1,432,582	2.06%	8.00%	114,607	0	34,892		
Bradfield Church of England Primary School	-1,061	46,306	47,367	570,805	8.11%	8.00%	45,664	641	2,012		0
Brightwalton Church of England Aided Primary School	21,994	28,745	6,750	445,729	6.45%	8.00%	35,658	0	3,301		
Brimpton Church of England Primary School	22,660	18,170	-4,490	280,316	6.48%	8.00%	22,425	0	473		
Bucklebury Church of England Primary School	-14,208	4,136	18,343	523,151	0.79%	8.00%	41,852	0	3,625		
Burghfield St Mary's Church of England Primary School	3,123	-848	-3,971	752,556	-0.11%	8.00%	60,204	0	4,829		
Calcot Schools Federation	121,424	189,329	67,905	2,017,219	9.39%	8.00%	161,378	27,952	11,185	43,500	0
Chieveley Primary School	2,405	693	-1,711	733,574	0.09%	8.00%	58,686	0	(220)		
Cold Ash St Mark's Church of England Primary School	52,459	50,549	-1,910	691,116	7.31%	8.00%	55,289	0	6,393		
Compton Church of England Primary School	17,953	18,908	955	686,365	2.75%	8.00%	54,909	0	270		
Curridge Primary School	10,032	11,451	1,419	444,873	2.57%	8.00%	35,590	0	1,549		
Dow nsway Primary School	58,827	60,893	2,066	797,525	7.64%	8.00%	63,802	0	12,606		
Enborne Church of England Primary School	11,516	5,216	-6,300	310,211	1.68%	8.00%	24,817	0	(1,908)		
Englefield Church of England Primary School	19,442	40,942	21,500	464,772	8.81%	8.00%	37,182	3,760	422		3,338
Falkland Primary School	110,033	127,017	16,984	1,515,156	8.38%	8.00%	121,212	5,804	8,253		0
Francis Baily Primary School	60,300	104,578	44,278	1,847,678	5.66%	8.00%	147,814	0	9,657		
Garland Junior School	27,071	53,174	26,103	806,551	6.59%	8.00%	64,524	0	21,922		
Hampstead Norreys Church of England Primary School	49,668	49,420	-248	441,163	11.20%	8.00%	35,293	14,127	18,153		0
Hermitage Primary School	29,647	51,514	21,867	716,014	7.19%	8.00%	57,281	0	6,856		
Hungerford Primary School	86,411	62,457	-23,954	1,502,264	4.16%	8.00%	120,181	0	31,216		
The Ittleys' Primary School	-21,475	19,073	40,547	299,930	6.36%	8.00%	23,994	0	441		
Inkpen Primary School	24,521	46,375	21,854	351,974	13.18%	8.00%	28,558	18,217	3,081		15,136
John Rankin Infant and Nursery School	43,460	-9,777	-53,237	1,006,259	-0.97%	8.00%	80,501	0	46		
John Rankin Junior School	21,177	-11,377	-32,554	843,855	-1.35%	8.00%	67,508	0	7,493		
Kennet Valley Primary School	53,962	59,956	5,994	803,597	7.46%	8.00%	64,288	0	4,901		
Kintbury St Mary's Church of England Primary School	51,665	35,898	-15,767	620,060	5.79%	8.00%	49,605	0	8,985		
Lambourn Church of England Primary School	33,590	121,846	88,257	828,969	14.70%	8.00%	66,318	55,529	53,367		2,162
Long Lane Primary School	18,021	35,095	17,074	879,354	3.99%	8.00%	70,348	0	15,558		
Mortimer St John's Church of England School	14,054	-21,354	-35,409	663,989	-3.22%	8.00%	53,119	0	(238)		
Mortimer St Mary's CofE Junior School	55,356	57,488	2,132	815,432	7.05%	8.00%	65,235	0	5,304		
Mrs Bland's Infant School	39,133	5,988	-33,146	751,280	0.80%	8.00%	60,102	0	12,933		
Pangbourne Primary School	48,281	52,082	3,801	797,184	6.53%	8.00%	63,775	0	7,935		
Parsons Down Schools Federation	78,144	155,018	76,874	2,005,625	7.73%	8.00%	160,450	0	18,616		
Rurley Church of England Infant School	10,642	23,912	13,269	375,134	6.37%	8.00%	30,011	0	14,872		
Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery	65,128	89,405	24,277	905,224	9.88%	8.00%	72,418	16,987	16,725	1,350	0
Shaw -cum-Donnington Church of England Primary School	22,758	22,265	-493	470,749	4.73%	8.00%	37,660	0	2,595		
Chaddleshorth Shefford Federation Church of England Primary School	36,993	52,521	15,528	426,186	12.32%	8.00%	34,095	18,427	23,900		0
Speenhamland Primary School	79,953	118,367	38,414	1,190,718	9.94%	8.00%	95,257	23,110	28,026		0
Springfield Primary School	60,172	34,611	-25,562	1,104,627	3.13%	8.00%	88,370	0	2,340		
Spurcroft Primary School	47,651	25,383	-22,268	1,503,145	1.69%	8.00%	120,252	0	9,781		
St Finian's Catholic Primary School	24,108	48,052	23,944	745,588	6.44%	8.00%	59,647	0	(11,724)		
St John the Evangelist Church of England Infant and Nursery School	13,362	-17,758	-31,120	757,954	-2.34%	8.00%	60,636	0	0		
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	46,287	42,802	-3,485	772,191	5.54%	8.00%	61,775	0	5,742		
St Nicolas Church of England Junior School	63,438	20,380	-43,058	925,355	2.20%	8.00%	74,028	0	5,888		
St Paul's Catholic Primary School	82,193	116,866	34,673	1,168,287	10.00%	8.00%	93,463	23,403	23,774		0
Stockcross Church of England School	22,769	34,304	11,535	454,815	7.54%	8.00%	36,385	0	3,086		
Streatley Church of England Voluntary Controlled School	28,884	31,866	2,982	451,862	7.05%	8.00%	36,149	0	8,022		
Sulhamstead and Upton Nervet Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	23,804	42,673	18,869	438,902	9.72%	8.00%	35,112	7,561	8,970		0
Thatcham Park Church of England Primary School	74,266	51,606	-22,660	1,469,149	3.51%	8.00%	117,532	0	22,552		
Theale Church of England Primary School	72,994	81,806	8,812	1,313,358	6.23%	8.00%	105,069	0	(1,260)		
Welford and Wickham Church of England Primary School	10,567	-1,914	-12,480	418,996	-0.46%	8.00%	33,520	0	1,085		
Westwood Farm Infant School	71,693	58,290	-13,403	814,766	7.15%	8.00%	65,181	0	20,287		
Westwood Farm Junior School	90,114	65,450	-24,664	1,013,901	6.46%	8.00%	81,112	0	15,068		
The Willow s Primary School	29,735	41,720	11,984	1,283,554	3.25%	8.00%	102,684	0	3,467		
The Winchcombe School	105,380	140,523	35,143	1,636,745	8.59%	8.00%	130,940	9,583	13,257		0
Woolhampton Church of England Primary School	15,738	16,980	1,242	426,717	3.98%	8.00%	34,137	0	12,314		
Yattendon Church of England Primary School	15,247	32,070	16,823	377,098	8.50%	8.00%	30,168	1,902	2,081		0
<b>TOTAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS</b>	<b>2,425,611</b>	<b>2,775,136</b>	<b>349,524</b>	<b>50,082,357</b>	<b>5.54%</b>			<b>236,226</b>	<b>561,118</b>	<b>57,340</b>	<b>20,637</b>
<b>SECONDARY SCHOOLS</b>											
The Downs School	154,102	260,971	106,869	5,823,307	4.48%	5.00%	291,165	0	0		
John O'Gaunt Community Technology College	-113,024	-507,255	-394,231	2,298,847	-22.07%	5.00%	114,942	0	97,978		
Little Heath School	69,407	23,911	-45,497	7,834,337	0.31%	5.00%	391,717	0	5,872		
The Willink School	151,083	31,603	-119,480	4,934,166	0.64%	5.00%	246,708	0	8,615		
<b>TOTAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS</b>	<b>261,568</b>	<b>-190,771</b>	<b>-452,338</b>	<b>20,890,657</b>	<b>-0.91%</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>112,465</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>SPECIAL SCHOOLS</b>											
Brookfields Special School	556,603	346,214	-210,389	5,016,386	6.90%	10.00%	501,639	0	38,354		
The Castle School	185,945	288,799	102,854	3,367,511	8.58%	10.00%	336,751	0	41,135		
<b>TOTAL SPECIAL SCHOOLS</b>	<b>742,548</b>	<b>635,013</b>	<b>-107,535</b>	<b>8,383,897</b>	<b>7.57%</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>79,488</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS</b>											
Alternative Curriculum	138,762	308,908	170,146	1,400,993	22.05%	10.00%	140,099	168,809	12,737		156,072
Reintegration Service	175,907	419,879	243,972	1,349,254	31.12%	10.00%	134,925	284,954	4,194		280,760
<b>TOTAL PRUs</b>	<b>314,669</b>	<b>728,787</b>	<b>414,118</b>	<b>2,750,247</b>	<b>26.50%</b>			<b>453,763</b>	<b>16,931</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>436,832</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR ALL SCHOOLS</b>	<b>3,820,159</b>	<b>4,022,260</b>	<b>202,101</b>	<b>83,121,102</b>	<b>4.84%</b>			<b>689,989</b>	<b>770,001</b>	<b>57,340</b>	<b>457,469</b>

## West Berkshire Council - Balance Control Mechanism

### Information on School Balances 2014/15

All yellow boxes (where required) to be completed and the form returned to the Schools Finance Team, Finance Department no later than 18th May 2015  
 Note that a positive figure is a surplus balance, a (negative) figure is a deficit balance

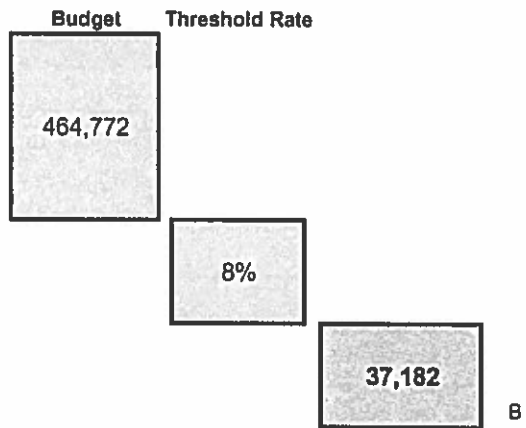
**Englefield Church of England Primary School**

**A. Closing Balances** (revenue balance ONLY as per CFR: excludes Community Focused)

	£	
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	40,942	A
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2014	19,442	
Increase / (decrease) on previous Year	21,500	
Of the closing balance as at 31 March 2015, what amount was committed (this information is required for CFR purposes)		
Committed		
Uncommitted	40,942	

**B. Upper Threshold for Excess Balance**

For mainstream schools "budget" is the 2015/16 total delegated budget allocation including resource unit/LAL funding, early years estimate, and 6th form funding, but excludes pupil premium grant, sports grants, SEN top up funding, and other income generated by the school. For other schools "budget" is the 2014/15 ACTUAL income/funding  
 Threshold rate is 8% Primary, 5% Secondary schools, or £20,000 whichever higher. 10% is a guideline for nursery schools, special schools and PRUs due to their funding being volatile



Upper Threshold

**C. Calculation of Relevant School Balance**

Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	40,942		= A
Less: PPG and PE & Sports Grant carried forward (Funds 08 & 13)	422		
Less: Any other ring fenced grant funds with permission to carry forward, and funds being held on behalf of a cluster or partnership agreement		ENTER AS A POSITIVE FIGURE	please provide breakdown & details:
Relevant Surplus Balance 31 March 2015 (for purpose of calculating excess balance)	40,520		C

**D. Amount by which Balance exceeds Threshold - The Excess Balance**

If C < B, then nil

3,338	D = C - B
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**Where there is a figure in Box D, explain how/why the school has accumulated such a large surplus balance:**

School had been expecting an additional charge of £1K for exceeding SLA support package due to School Review carried out in November 14 (email S Godard 5/3/15 refers), recharge not made during financial year. School's monitoring of electricity had projected higher electricity costs, not all invoices were processed at year end as part of WB contract with British Gas

**E. Use of Relevant Surplus Balance (C) - ONLY TO BE COMPLETED WHERE THERE IS A FIGURE IN BOX D**

	Description of Planned Use of Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan (see below for permitted use):	Planned Implementation Date	Amount £ (ENTER AS POSITIVE FIGURE)	Which Strategic Document	Purchase Order Number	Account Code in budget Plan
1	Capital Improvement - Governors 10% contribution to Phase 2 of Windows/Doors replacement project	May-15	3,500	Building Development Plan		K0200
2	School projected to go into deficit from 2016/17, as pupil nos. in Oct 15 projected to be 101 vs. 111 in Oct 14. Surplus balance 2015/16 to support future years		13,960	4-yr budget plan		
3						
4						
5						
<b>Sub Total Planned Items</b>			<b>17,460</b>			
<b>Unplanned Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan:</b>				<b>%</b>		
1	General Contingency (as per code A0003 in your 2015/16 budget plan)		23,060		4.96%	
2	Balance not Identified (should come back to zero)		(0)			

**F. Signatures**

Headteacher:

Date:

Chair of Governors

Date:

**Notes to the above**

**Thresholds**

Note that the 8% and 5% thresholds are not targets, but the maximum percentage which should reasonably be retained for a planned use or a contingency to deal with unforeseen circumstances. In practice, most schools should be able to manage with balances of 2-3%

**Permitted Uses of Balances:**

- 1 A planned investment project within the School Development Plan or similar documents that will improve the quality of education/raise achievement with specific and explicit links to the objectives of the school.
  - e.g. additional staffing to support a specific purpose or activity
  - replacement of life expired equipment
  - capital improvement
  - investment in new technology
  - responding to health and safety requirements
  - improving access to school sites and buildings
  - responding to needs identified by Ofsted inspections
- 2 Sustaining appropriate levels of staffing through a planned period of turbulence up to a maximum of 3 years, supported by your 3 year pupil forecasts and budget plan i.e. temporary reduction in pupil numbers/funding
- 3 Where unavoidable delay has moved legally committed expenditure into the following financial year i.e. order placed, goods/service not received by 31st March

**\*\* Note that balances cannot be used to fund on-going costs - these need to be funded on a sustainable basis\*\***

# West Berkshire Council - Balance Control Mechanism

## Information on School Balances 2014/15

All yellow boxes (where required) to be completed and the form returned to the Schools Finance Team, Finance Department no later than 18th May 2015  
 Note that a positive figure is a surplus balance, a (negative) figure is a deficit balance

**Inkpen Primary School**

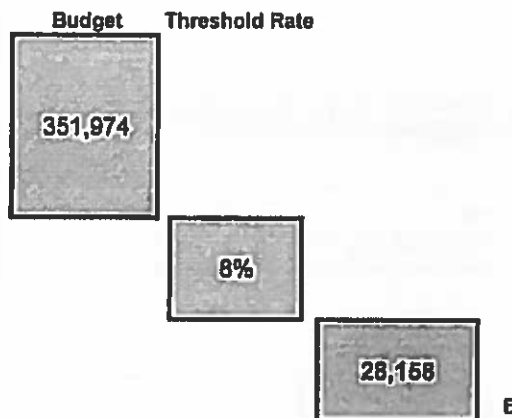
**A. Closing Balances** (revenue balance ONLY as per CFR: excludes Community Focused)

	£	
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	46,375	A
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2014	24,521	
Increase / (decrease) on previous Year	21,854	
Of the closing balance as at 31 March 2015, what amount was committed (this information is required for CFR purposes)		
Committed	7,369	
Uncommitted	39,006	

**B. Upper Threshold for Excess Balance**

For mainstream schools "budget" is the 2015/16 total delegated budget allocation including resource unit/LAL funding, early years estimate, and 6th form funding, but excludes pupil premium grant, sports grants, SEN top up funding, and other income generated by the school. For other schools "budget" is the 2014/15 ACTUAL income/funding

Threshold rate is 8% Primary, 5% Secondary schools, or £20,000 whichever higher. 10% is a guideline for nursery schools, special schools and PRUs due to their funding being volatile



Upper Threshold

**C. Calculation of Relevant School Balance**

Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	46,375	= A
Less: PPG and PE & Sports Grant carried forward (Funds 08 & 13)	3,081	
Less: Any other ring fenced grant funds with permission to carry forward, and funds being held on behalf of a cluster or partnership agreement	ENTER AS A POSITIVE FIGURE	
Relevant Surplus Balance 31 March 2015 (for purpose of calculating excess balance)	43,294	C

**D. Amount by which Balance exceeds Threshold - The Excess Balance**

If C < B, then nil

15,136	D = C - B
--------	-----------

Where there is a figure in Box D, explain how/why the school has accumulated such a large surplus balance:

Works undertaken during the Easter break & invoices have almost all been paid in first instalment in April. Redecorating works, Electrical works identified in 5 yr survey, heating improvements, along with new website design and other small items totalling £7369 (orders on system pre March 15) The claw back figure being worked to was £30k not £28k as advised on the 2014/15 Budget allocation. Other contributing factor was that the FMS system was not clearing all the commitment for salaries for all staff, leaving two staffs commitment accumulating (£20K) and giving a false figure in the Budget Monitoring. This was identified following Governors meeting 12/2/15 when further investigation was undertaken, caused by a system fault as the school uses WB Auto Rec system and the newness and inexperience of the BM in using Auto Rec. Once manually adjusted this corrected the system & budget monitoring

**E. Use of Relevant Surplus Balance (C) - ONLY TO BE COMPLETED WHERE THERE IS A FIGURE IN BOX D**

	Planned Implementation Date	Amount £ (ENTER AS POSITIVE FIGURE)	Which Strategic Document	Purchase Order Number	Account Code In budget Plan
<b>Description of Planned Use of Balances Included in your 2015/16 budget plan (see below for permitted use):</b>					
1	Electrical Repairs, Heating improvements, Redecoration & Website Design	April/May 15	7,369		189/192/193/134 C0010 & E0500
2	Following the Supported Self Review by WB Improvement team on 6/3/15 need to strengthen leadership and make 2x temp appts with TLR3 for 16 mths for Maths & English Coordinators	May-15	3,438	School Improvement	A2100
3	Following on from the heating improvements during Easter further essential works (further leaking radiators & pipework) needs to be undertaken during the May half term break-email dated 11/4/15	May-15	1,700		28 C0010
4	SMART Board issues arise and advised 3 of 4 need replacing Governors approved 1 purchase now 29/4	Apr-15	1,020		27 E0505
5	2015/16 Contingency required to cover fall in income (small yr0) & 2017/18 then income restored.				
<b>Sub Total Planned Items</b>			<b>13,526</b>		
<b>Unplanned Balances Included in your 2015/16 budget plan:</b>					
1	General Contingency (as per code A0003 in your 2015/16 budget plan)		28,824	8.19%	
2	Balance not identified (should come back to zero)		945		

**F. Signatures**

Headteacher:  


Date:  
 6.5.15

Chair of Governors  


Date:  
 6.5.15

**Notes to the above**

**Thresholds**

Note that the 8% and 5% thresholds are not targets, but the maximum percentage which should reasonably be retained for a planned use or a contingency to deal with unforeseen circumstances. In practice, most schools should be able to manage with balances of 2-3%

**Permitted Uses of Balances:**

- A planned investment project within the School Development Plan or similar documents that will improve the quality of education/raise achievement with specific and explicit links to the objectives of the school.
  - e.g. additional staffing to support a specific purpose or activity
  - replacement of life expired equipment
  - capital improvement
  - investment in new technology
  - responding to health and safety requirements
  - improving access to school sites and buildings
  - responding to needs identified by Ofsted inspections
- Sustaining appropriate levels of staffing through a planned period of turbulence up to a maximum of 3 years, supported by your 3 year pupil forecasts and budget plan i.e. temporary reduction in pupil numbers/funding
- Where unavoidable delay has moved legally committed expenditure into the following financial year i.e. order placed, goods/service not received by 31st March

**\*\* Note that balances cannot be used to fund on-going costs - these need to be funded on a sustainable basis\*\***



## West Berkshire Council - Balance Control Mechanism

### Information on School Balances 2014/15

All yellow boxes (where required) to be completed and the form returned to the Schools Finance Team, Finance Department no later than 18th May 2015  
 Note that a positive figure is a surplus balance, a (negative) figure is a deficit balance

#### Lambourn Church of England Primary School

#### A. Closing Balances (revenue balance ONLY as per CFR: excludes Community Focused)

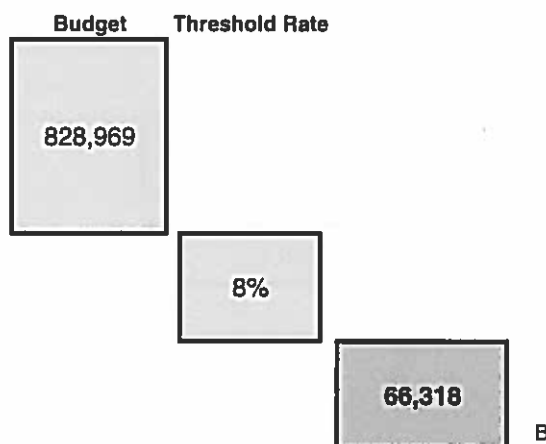
	£	
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	121,846	A
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2014	33,590	
Increase / (decrease) on previous Year	88,257	
<b>Of the closing balance as at 31 March 2015, what amount was committed (this information is required for CFR purposes)</b>		
Committed		
Uncommitted	121,846	

#### B. Upper Threshold for Excess Balance

For mainstream schools "budget" is the 2015/16 total delegated budget allocation including resource unit/LAL funding, early years estimate, and 6th form funding, but excludes pupil premium grant, sports grants, SEN top up funding, and other income generated by the school. For other schools "budget" is the 2014/15 ACTUAL income/funding

Threshold rate is 8% Primary, 5% Secondary schools, or £20,000 whichever higher. 10% is a guideline for nursery schools, special schools and PRUs due to their funding being volatile

Upper Threshold



#### C. Calculation of Relevant School Balance

Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015

121,846

= A

Less: PPG and PE & Sports Grant carried forward (Funds 08 & 13)

53,367

Less: Any other ring fenced grant funds with permission to carry forward, and funds being held on behalf of a cluster or partnership agreement

ENTER AS A  
POSITIVE  
FIGURE

please provide breakdown & details:

Relevant Surplus Balance 31 March 2015 (for purpose of calculating excess balance)

68,479

C

#### D. Amount by which Balance exceeds Threshold - The Excess Balance

If C < B, then nil

2,162

D = C - B

**Where there is a figure in Box D, explain how/why the school has accumulated such a large surplus balance:**

The school this year was unsuccessful in recruiting a Head Teacher so the Deputy acted as Head, saving the Deputy Head Salary. We also lost our SEN Teacher that was not replaced. We now have a permanent Head Teacher in place after successfully recruiting.

**E. Use of Relevant Surplus Balance (C) - ONLY TO BE COMPLETED WHERE THERE IS A FIGURE IN BOX D**

	Planned Implementation Date	Amount £ (ENTER AS POSITIVE FIGURE)	Which Strategic Document	Purchase Order Number	Account Code in budget Plan
<b>Description of Planned Use of Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan (see below for permitted use):</b>					
1 Smartboards for KS1 New Build-Completion date estimated June 2015	Jul-15	10,408		LAMB071178	K0200
2 Covered KS1 Sandpit	Sep-15	5,000			K0200
3 Furniture/storge for KS1 building	Sep-15	10,000			K0200
4 Furniture/storage for new KS2 building	Sep-15	10,000			K0200
5 IT replacement in plan, meeting arranged with ERGO	Sep-15	20,000			K0200
<b>Sub Total Planned Items</b>		<b>55,408</b>			
<b>Unplanned Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan:</b>					<b>%</b>
1 General Contingency (as per code A0003 in your 2015/16 budget plan)		13,071			1.58%
2 Balance not Identified (should come back to zero)		0			

**F. Signatures**

Headteacher:

Date:

Chair of Governors

Date:

**Notes to the above**

**Thresholds**

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e.g. additional staffing to support a specific purpose or activity  
replacement of life expired equipment  
capital improvement  
investment in new technology  
responding to health and safety requirements  
improving access to school sites and buildings  
responding to needs identified by Ofsted inspections
- Sustaining appropriate levels of staffing through a planned period of turbulence up to a maximum of 3 years, supported by your 3 year pupil forecasts and budget plan i.e. temporary reduction in pupil numbers/funding
- Where unavoidable delay has moved legally committed expenditure into the following financial year i.e. order placed, goods/service not received by 31st March

**\*\* Note that balances cannot be used to fund on-going costs - these need to be funded on a sustainable basis\*\***

## West Berkshire Council - Balance Control Mechanism

### Information on School Balances 2014/15

All yellow boxes (where required) to be completed and the form returned to the Schools Finance Team, Finance Department no later than 18th May 2015  
 Note that a positive figure is a surplus balance, a (negative) figure is a deficit balance

**Alternative Curriculum**

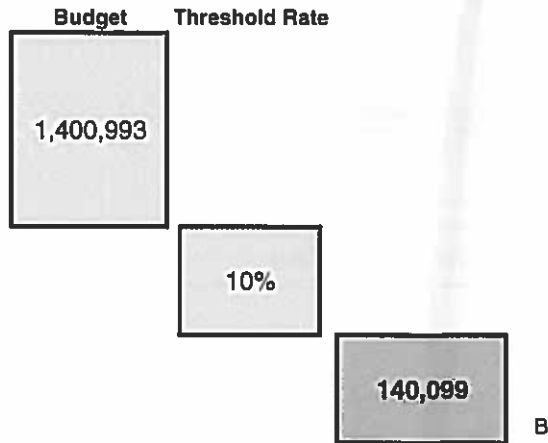
**A. Closing Balances** (revenue balance ONLY as per CFR; excludes Community Focused)

	£	
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	308,908	A
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2014	138,762	
Increase / (decrease) on previous Year	170,146	
<b>Of the closing balance as at 31 March 2015, what amount was committed (this information is required for CFR purposes)</b>		
Committed		
Uncommitted	308,908	

**B. Upper Threshold for Excess Balance**

For mainstream schools "budget" is the 2015/16 total delegated budget allocation including resource unit/LAL funding, early years estimate, and 6th form funding, but excludes pupil premium grant, sports grants, SEN top up funding, and other income generated by the school. For other schools "budget" is the 2014/15 ACTUAL income/funding

Threshold rate is 8% Primary, 5% Secondary schools, or £20,000 whichever higher. 10% is a guideline for nursery schools, special schools and PRUs due to their funding being volatile



**C. Calculation of Relevant School Balance**

Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	308,908		
	= A		
Less: PPG and PE & Sports Grant carried forward (Funds 08 & 13)	12,737		
Less: Any other ring fenced grant funds with permission to carry forward, and funds being held on behalf of a cluster or partnership agreement		ENTER AS A POSITIVE FIGURE	please provide breakdown & details:
Relevant Surplus Balance 31 March 2015 (for purpose of calculating excess balance)	296,171		C

**D. Amount by which Balance exceeds Threshold - The Excess Balance**

If C < B, then nil

156,072	D = C - B
---------	-----------

Where there is a figure in Box D, explain how/why the school has accumulated such a large surplus balance:

High needs funding for more students than anticipated

**E. Use of Relevant Surplus Balance (C) - ONLY TO BE COMPLETED WHERE THERE IS A FIGURE IN BOX D**

	Planned Implementation Date	Amount £ (ENTER AS POSITIVE FIGURE)	Which Strategic Document	Purchase Order Number	Account Code in budget Plan
<b>Description of Planned Use of Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan (see below for permitted use):</b>					
1 Upgrade replacement of windows at The Porch	Aug-15	100,000			K0200
2 Contingency to cover any staff disputes and/or redundancies	As necessary	75,000			A6910
3 Additional activities to support more vulnerable students	Throughout year	30,500			E0352
4 Additional SEN TA's to assist and support high needs students	Throughout year	30,810			A2165
5 Catering contingency to cover fluctuating numbers, Xmas etc - no charge made for lunch Tools and supplies for caretaker, funds to cover invoices for new phone systems at BW and BH, contracts contingency, Porch kitchen additions, Classroom tables BW, Office furniture contingency,	Throughout year	9,691			N0621, E0420, C0106,
<b>Sub Total Planned Items</b>		<b>246,001</b>			

**Unplanned Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan:**

1 General Contingency (as per code A0003 in your 2015/16 budget plan)	50,170	3.58%
2 Balance not Identified (should come back to zero)	0	

**F. Signatures**

Headteacher:

Jacque Davies

Date:

12.5.15

Chair of Governors

Rod King

Date:

12.5.15

**Notes to the above**

**Thresholds**

Note that the 8% and 5% thresholds are not targets, but the maximum percentage which should reasonably be retained for a planned use or a contingency to deal with unforeseen circumstances. In practice, most schools should be able to manage with balances of 2-3%

**Permitted Uses of Balances:**

- 1 A planned investment project within the School Development Plan or similar documents that will improve the quality of education/raise achievement with specific and explicit links to the objectives of the school.
  - e.g. additional staffing to support a specific purpose or activity
  - replacement of life expired equipment
  - capital improvement
  - investment in new technology
  - responding to health and safety requirements
  - improving access to school sites and buildings
  - responding to needs identified by Ofsted inspections
- 2 Sustaining appropriate levels of staffing through a planned period of turbulence up to a maximum of 3 years, supported by your 3 year pupil forecasts and budget plan i.e. temporary reduction in pupil numbers/funding
- 3 Where unavoidable delay has moved legally committed expenditure into the following financial year i.e. order placed, goods/service not received by 31st March

**\*\* Note that balances cannot be used to fund on-going costs - these need to be funded on a sustainable basis\*\***

# West Berkshire Council - Balance Control Mechanism

## Information on School Balances 2014/15

All yellow boxes (where required) to be completed and the form returned to the Schools Finance Team, Finance Department no later than 18th May 2015  
 Note that a positive figure is a surplus balance, a (negative) figure is a deficit balance

**Reintegration Service**

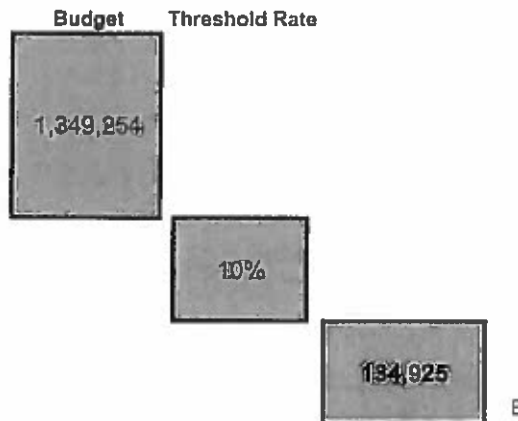
**A. Closing Balances** (revenue balance ONLY as per CFR, excludes Community Focused)

£

Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	419,879	A
Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2014	175,907	
Increase / (decrease) on previous Year	243,972	
Of the closing balance as at 31 March 2015, what amount was committed (this information is required for CFR purposes)		
Committed	26,000	
Uncommitted	393,879	

**B. Upper Threshold for Excess Balance**

For mainstream schools "budget" is the 2015/16 total delegated budget allocation including resource unit/LAL funding, early years estimate, and 6th form funding, but excludes pupil premium grant, sports grants, SEN top up funding, and other income generated by the school. For other schools "budget" is the 2014/15 ACTUAL income/funding  
 Threshold rate is 8% Primary, 5% Secondary schools, or £20,000 whichever higher. 10% is a guideline for nursery schools, special schools and PRUs due to their funding being volatile



Upper Threshold

**C. Calculation of Relevant School Balance**

Surplus / (deficit) as at 31 March 2015	419,879	= A
Less: PPG and PE & Sports Grant carried forward (Funds 08 & 13)	4,194	
Less: Any other ring fenced grant funds with permission to carry forward, and funds being held on behalf of a cluster or partnership agreement		please provide breakdown & details:
Relevant Surplus Balance 31 March 2015 (for purpose of calculating excess balance)	415,686	C

ENTER AS A POSITIVE FIGURE

**D. Amount by which Balance exceeds Threshold - The Excess Balance**

If C < B, then nil

280,760	D = C - B
---------	-----------

Where there is a figure in Box D, explain how/why the school has accumulated such a large surplus balance:

1. Due to uncertain income, a contingency of £120,000 was kept in order to ensure staffing costs could be met if student numbers were low. This was not the case in the financial year 14-15.
2. At various times of the year all units have taken over the agreed number of students and this has led to a greater income than was forecast. This particular year has been exceptional and unprecedented in terms of student numbers.
3. A staffing structure was budgetted for (14-15 budget) but was not actioned by governors and this led to a staffing underspend.

**E. Use of Relevant Surplus Balance (C) - ONLY TO BE COMPLETED WHERE THERE IS A FIGURE IN BOX D**

Description of Planned Use of Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan (see below for permitted use):	Planned Implementation Date	Amount £ (ENTER AS POSITIVE FIGURE)	Which Strategic Document	Purchase Order Number	Account Code in budget Plan
1 Schools Forum agreed a single band which will significantly reduce the forecasted income	Apr-15	100,100			Z0003
2 Schools Forum significantly reduced the funding for the 'Outreach' section of the budget	Apr-15	80,000			Z0003
3 There remains a requirement for contingency due to uncertainty of student numbers	Apr-15	120,000			
4 Costs to safeguard premises (Riverside) Replacement of side door and mag lock at The Oaks	Sep-15	40,000			E12
5 Increase in staffing due to increments, maternity etc Addition of a caretaker to manage the sites Procurement of new kitchen equipment to include industry size cookers etc	Apr-15	48,710			E01.E25
<b>Sub Total Planned Items</b>		<b>388,810</b>			
<b>Unplanned Balances included in your 2015/16 budget plan:</b>					
1 General Contingency (as per code A0003 in your 2015/16 budget plan)		25,876		1.99%	
2 Balance not Identified (should come back to zero)		(0)			

**F. Signatures**


Headteacher:



Date:

13/5/15

Chair of Governors



Date:

13/05/15

**Notes to the above**

**Thresholds**

Note that the 8% and 5% thresholds are not targets, but the maximum percentage which should reasonably be retained for a planned use or a contingency to deal with unforeseen circumstances. In practice, most schools should be able to manage with balances of 2-3%

**Permitted Uses of Balances:**

- 1 A planned investment project within the School Development Plan or similar documents that will improve the quality of education/raise achievement with specific and explicit links to the objectives of the school.
  - e.g. additional staffing to support a specific purpose or activity
  - replacement of life expired equipment
  - capital improvement
  - investment in new technology
  - responding to health and safety requirements
  - improving access to school sites and buildings
  - responding to needs identified by Ofsted inspections
- 2 Sustaining appropriate levels of staffing through a planned period of turbulence up to a maximum of 3 years, supported by your 3 year pupil forecasts and budget plan i.e. temporary reduction in pupil numbers/funding
- 3 Where unavoidable delay has moved legally committed expenditure into the following financial year i.e. order placed, goods/service not received by 31st March

**\*\* Note that balances cannot be used to fund on-going costs - these need to be funded on a sustainable basis\*\***

# Agenda Item 8

West Berkshire Schools' Forum	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Vulnerable Children's Grant Annual Report 2014/15</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>15th June 2015</b>
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	<b>Cathy Burnham</b>
<b>For Information</b>	

**Total budget: 2012/13 =£98,510, 2013/14 =£80,000, 2014/15 = £80,000, 2015/16= £60,000**

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<b>Requests agreed</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>102</b> (including repeats)
<b>Requests refused</b>	<b>4</b> due to funding available elsewhere	<b>4</b> deferred until April 2014 due to predicted lack of funds	<b>4</b> because they had SEN statements <b>6</b> deferred until after April due to lack of funds
<b>Schools accessing fund</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>
primary	<b>35</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>
secondary	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
pru	<b>3 bases</b>	<b>4 bases</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Students supported</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>66</b>
primary	<b>67</b> £66,686	<b>68</b> £63,829	<b>54</b> £68,017
secondary	<b>8</b> £14,808	<b>6</b> £8,492	<b>8</b> £9,100
prus	<b>8</b> £17,071	<b>4</b> £4,815	<b>0</b>
<b>Requests extended beyond initial term</b>	<b>18</b> (15.4% of total)	<b>12</b> (14% of total)	<b>17</b> (25.7% of total)
<b>Type of support:</b>			
<b>Additional TA</b>	<b>102</b> (87.25%) £85,675	<b>72</b> (85% of total) £68,193	<b>97</b> (95%) £69,968
<b>External package</b>	<b>8</b> (6.8%) £7,083	<b>6</b> (7.0%) £4,915	<b>3</b> (2.9%) £3,794
<b>Holiday support</b>	<b>6</b> (5.1%) £2,405	<b>6</b> (7.0%) £1,274	<b>1</b> (1%) £700
<b>Medical support</b>	<b>1</b> (0.85%) £3,402	<b>1</b> (1%) £2,754	<b>1</b> (1%) £2,655
<b>Total spend</b>	<b>£98,565</b>	<b>£77,136</b> (schools did not claim in time for end March).	<b>£77,117</b> (4 did not claim)

Pupils supported include those with: Challenging behaviour, Unstable diabetes, Unexpected in-year admissions, Bereavement, early intervention in Foundation stage for those not 'school ready,' 2 primary unaccompanied asylum seekers from Afghanistan, LAC pupils moving into the LA.

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Education  
Funding  
Agency

# Schools forum

Operational and good practice guide

March 2015

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## Introduction

1. This guide is designed to provide local authority officers and school forum elected members with advice and information on good practice in relation to the operation of schools forums.
2. It is organised in two sections:
  - Section 1 provides information on the constitutional and organisational requirements for schools forums; and
  - Section 2 covers a number of key aspects of the operation of schools forums at local level, drawing on good practice from a number of schools forums.
3. The guide draws on the experience and knowledge of schools forum members, local authority members and officers and the Department and its partners. Other than where it is describing requirements set out in the Schools Forum Regulations 2012 it is not designed to be prescriptive – what is good practice in one schools forum may not be appropriate in another, given the diverse circumstances of local areas. However, it is hoped the guide will stimulate some debate within schools forums and contribute to their ongoing development.
4. The Department hopes that schools forums and local authorities find this guide useful. It has been the subject of consultation with a wide variety of external partners. In particular, members of the Department’s Schools and Academies Funding Group, made up of representatives from central and local government, teaching associations, unions representing support staff as well as organisations representing academies and governors, have provided valuable input and advice on the content of the guide. The Department is grateful for their assistance.
5. The Department’s website contains details of all the announcements, documents and other information relating to school funding and schools forums. This website also has a range of useful links to other sites that may be of relevance to schools forum members.
6. A short [guide to the schools forum for schools and academies](#), which may be helpful to stakeholders and the wider school family, is available on GOV.UK.
7. If you have any queries about the operation of schools forums please contact [schools forum team](#) at the Education Funding Agency

The postal address is:

Education Funding Agency  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
Westminster  
London  
SW1P 3BT

# Section 1 – schools forum regulations: constitution and procedural issues

## Regulations

8. [National regulations](#)<sup>1</sup> govern the composition, constitution and procedures of schools forums. Local authorities can provide schools forum members with a copy of these regulations or alternatively they can be accessed at:
9. A short [guide to the schools forum for schools and academies](#) is also available to provide a wider understanding of the work of schools forums.

## Schools forum powers

10. Schools forums generally have a consultative role. However, there are situations in which they have decision-making powers. The respective roles of schools forums, local authorities and the DfE are summarised in [schools forum powers and responsibilities](#). The overarching areas on which schools forums make decisions on local authority proposals are:

- De-delegation from mainstream schools budgets (separate approval will be required by the primary and secondary phase members of schools forum), for prescribed services to be provided centrally.
- To create a fund for significant pupil growth in order to support the local authority's duty for place planning (basic need), including pre-opening and diseconomy of scale costs, and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this fund.
- To create a fund for falling rolls for good or outstanding schools if the schools' surplus capacity is likely to be needed within the next three years to meet rising pupil numbers and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this fund.
- Continued funding at existing levels for prescribed historic commitments where the effect of delegating this funding would be destabilising.
- Funding for the local authority in order to meet prescribed statutory duties placed upon it. Approval is required to confirm the amounts for each duty and no new commitments or increases in expenditure from 2013/14 are permitted unless agreed by the Secretary of State.
- Funding for central early years expenditure, which may include funding for checking eligibility of pupils for an early years place, the early years pupil premium and/or free school meals.

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<sup>1</sup> Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2261) (as amended)

- Authorising a reduction in the schools budget in order to fund a deficit arising in central expenditure that is to be carried forward from a previous funding period.
- In each of these cases, the local authority can appeal to the Secretary of State if the schools forum rejects its proposal.

11. Local Authorities should be aware that the provisions of the [Local Government Act 2000](#) restrict the delegation of local authority decisions to Cabinet, a member of Cabinet, a Committee of Cabinet or an officer of the Council, which would not include schools forums. As a result the local authority cannot delegate its decision making powers to schools forum, e.g. decisions on the funding formula.

12. Regulations state that the local authority must consult the schools forum annually in connection with various schools budget functions, namely:

- amendments to the school funding formula, for which the voting is restricted by the exclusion of non-schools members except for PVI representatives
- arrangements for the education of 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
- arrangements for the 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
- arrangements for early years provision
- administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the local authority

There is no specific definition of these consultation requirements over and above the wording in the regulations. It is a matter for the local authority to decide on the appropriate level of detail it needs to generate a sufficiently informed response from schools forum.

13. Consultation must also take place when a local authority is proposing a contract for supplies and services which is to be funded from the Schools Budget and is in excess of the EU procurement thresholds. The consultation must cover the terms of the contract at least one month prior to the issue of invitations to tender.

14. The schools forum has the responsibility of informing the governing bodies of all schools maintained by the local authority of the results of any consultations carried out by the local authority relating to the issues in paragraphs 12 and 13 above.

15. Local authorities will need to discuss with the schools forum any proposals that they intend to put to the Secretary of State to:

- vary the MFG,
- use exceptional factors
- vary pupil numbers
- allow additional categories of, or spending on, central budgets

- amend the sparsity factor
- vary the lump sum for amalgamating schools
- vary the protection for special schools and special academies

Proposals will then need to be approved by the Secretary of State.

## Membership

16. The Schools Forums Regulations provide a framework for the appointment of members, but allow a considerable degree of discretion in order to accommodate local priorities and practice. A quick guide to the [structure of the schools forums](#) is available.

17. There is no maximum or minimum size of a schools forum. Authorities will wish to take various issues into account in deciding the actual size, including the need to have full representation for various types of school, and the local authority's policy on representation of non-schools members. However, care should be taken to keep the schools forum to a reasonable size to ensure that it does not become too unwieldy.

18. Types of member: schools forums must have 'schools members', 'academies member(s)' if there is at least one academy in the local authority's area and 'non-schools members'. Schools and academies members together must number at least two-thirds of the total membership of the schools forum and the balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies members must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category, so the structure of Forum should be regularly reviewed, e.g. annually. Academies members must represent mainstream academies and, if there are any in the LA area, special academies and alternative provision academies. There is no requirement for academies members to represent specific primary and secondary phases, but it may be encouraged to ensure representation remains broadly proportionate to pupil numbers. Academy members must be separately elected and designated from maintained school representatives.

19. Schools forum members will need the skills and competencies to manage Forum business (as detailed in [school forum powers and responsibilities](#)) and to take a strategic view across the whole education estate whilst acting as representative of the group that has elected them. Furthermore, they should be easily contactable and pro-active in raising the profile of issues and communicate decisions, and the reasons behind them, effectively.

## Term of office

20. The term of office for each schools member and academies member should be stipulated by the local authority at the time of appointment. Such stipulation should follow published rules and be applied in a consistent manner between members. They need not have identical terms – there may be a case for varied terms so that there is continuity of experience rather than there being a complete change in the membership at a single

point. The term of office should not be of a length that would hinder the requirement for the structure of the schools forum to mirror the type of provision in light of the pace of academy conversions. Examples of how this may work include:

- Holding vacancies until the schools forum structure is reviewed providing that this does not mean holding vacancies for an unreasonable length of time
- Increasing the size of the schools forum temporarily to appoint additional academy members, then delete schools member posts at the end of a term of office or when a vacancy arises
- Consider continuity of service – where an academy conversion affects the school of a current schools member, would academies consider appointing that person as an academies member?

21. The length of term of office for non-schools members is at the discretion of the local authority. Schools and academies must be informed, within a month of the appointment of any non-schools member, of the name of the member and the name of the body that that member represents.

22. As well as the term of office coming to an end, a member ceases to be a member of the Schools Forum if he or she resigns from the schools forum or no longer occupies the office by which he or she became eligible for election, selection or appointment to the schools forum. For example, a secondary schools member must stand down if their school converts to an academy. A schools member representing community primary school governors who is no longer a governor of a community primary school in the relevant local authority must cease to hold office on the schools forum even if they remain a governor of a school represented by another group or sub-group. Other situations in which membership of the schools forum ends are if a member gives notice in writing to the local authority and, in the case of a non-schools member, the member is replaced by the local authority, for example at the request of the body which the member represents.

## **Schools members**

23. Schools members represent specified phases or types of maintained schools within the local authority. As a minimum, schools forums must contain representatives of two groups of schools: primary and secondary schools, unless there are no primary or secondary schools maintained by the LA. Middle schools and all through schools are treated according to their deemed status.

24. Where a local authority maintains one or more special schools the schools forum must have at least one schools member from that sector. The same applies to nursery schools and pupil referral units (PRUs).

25. The local authority then has discretion to divide the groups referred to in paragraph 16 and 17 into one or more of the following sub-groups:



- headteachers or headteachers' representatives in each group;
- governors in each group;
- headteachers or headteachers representatives and governors in each group;
- representatives of a particular school category, e.g. voluntary aided.

26. Headteachers can be represented by other senior members of staff within their school. Governors can include interim executive members of an interim executive board. The sub-groups do not have to be of equal size – for example, there may be more representatives of headteachers of primary schools than governors of such schools, or vice versa. The membership structure of the schools forum should ensure there is sufficient representation of each type of schools member in each group to ensure that debate within the schools forum is balanced and representative. As a minimum, there must be at least one representative of headteachers and one representative of governors among the schools members.

27. Whatever the membership structure of schools members on a schools forum, the important issue is that it should reflect most effectively the profile of education provision across the local authority to ensure that there is not an in-built bias towards any one phase or group.

## **Election and nomination of schools members**

28. The relevant group or sub-group is probably best placed to determine how their schools members should be elected.

29. It is good practice for those who draw up the scheme to ensure that a vacancy amongst a represented group would be filled by a nominee elected according to a process that has been determined by all those represented in that group, e.g. community primary school headteachers, or secondary school governors, ensuring that everyone represented has had the opportunity to stand for election and/or vote in such an election. The process must be restricted to the group in question – a headteachers phase group could only vote as a whole for headteacher members if the voting excluded academies, as academies members form a separate group.

30. It is not appropriate for a single person to be elected to represent more than one group or sub-group concurrently, i.e. if they were a governor at a primary and secondary school. They can stand for election from either group but can be appointed to represent only one of those groups.

31. The purpose of ensuring that each group or sub-group is responsible for their election process is to guarantee that there is a transparent and representative process by which members of schools forums are nominated to represent their constituents.

32. Appropriate support to each group or sub-group to manage their election processes should be offered by the clerk of a schools forum, or the committee/democratic services of a local authority. This may just include the provision of

advice but may also consist of providing administrative support in actually running the elections themselves.

33. As a minimum, we would recommend that the clerk of a schools forum make a record of the process by which the relevant schools within each group and sub-group elect their nominees to the schools forum and be able to advise the Chair of the schools forum and local authority on action that needs to be taken, where necessary, to seek new nominees.

34. In determining the process by which elections should be operated it is perfectly legitimate for a local authority to devise, in consultation with their schools forum, a model scheme for the relevant schools within a group or sub-group to consider and be invited to adopt. However, such a model scheme cannot be imposed on that body of schools: adaptations and/or alternative schemes may be adopted. A single scheme need not be adopted universally.

35. Care should be taken to ensure that every eligible member of a group or sub-group has an opportunity to be involved in the determination of their group's election process, is given the opportunity to stand for election if they choose to do so, and is involved in the election of their representative(s).

36. It would not be compliant with the regulations for the steering committee or Chair of a 'parent' group simply to make a nomination to represent their group or sub-group on a schools forum. Schools members must be elected, subject to paragraph 39 below.

37. The local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and must appoint the schools member if the election has not taken place by that date. The person appointed should be a member of the relevant group.

38. We would recommend that any scheme takes into account a number of factors:

- the process for collecting names of those wishing to stand for election;
- the timescale for notifying all constituents of the election and those standing;
- the arrangements for dispatching and receiving ballots;
- the arrangements for counting and publicising the results;
- any arrangements for unusual circumstances such as only one candidate standing in an election; and
- whether existing members can stand for re-election.

39. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates, then the local authority must appoint the schools member instead. The local authority may decide to appoint someone else rather than one of the candidates and might wish to take into account the experience or expertise of the individuals, and the balance between the different types of school represented on the schools forum.

## **Election and nomination of academies members**

40. Academies members must be elected by the proprietor bodies of the academies in the local authority's area, and they are probably best placed to determine the process. Academies members are there to represent the proprietor bodies of academies and are, therefore, not necessarily restricted to principals, senior staff or governors. The same factors should be taken into account as for the election of schools members, set out in paragraphs 28 to 39. For the avoidance of doubt, Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools are classed as academies for this purpose. There is no distinction between sponsored, non-recoupment and converter academies.

41. There are three sub-groups for academy members: mainstream academies, special academies and alternative provision academies and it is for the proprietors of academies within each of these sub-groups to elect their representatives. It is not appropriate, therefore, for headteacher phase groups to determine representation unless the academy proprietors have agreed and even then the voting would need to exclude maintained school representatives. There is no requirement for academies members to be split into primary and secondary sub-groups. However, local authorities may wish to encourage academies to consider the pupil proportions across all academies when electing their representatives.

42. Where there is only one academy in a sub-group in the local authority's area, then their proprietor body must select the person who will represent them.

43. It is possible that a single person be appointed as an academies member to more than one schools forum, for example if an academy chain is located across multiple local authorities, providing they are elected on each occasion in accordance with the agreed election process for each separate schools forum.

44. As with schools members, the local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and must appoint an academies member if the election does not take place by that date, or if an election results in a tie between two or more candidates.

## **Non-schools members**

45. Non-schools members may number no more than a third of a schools forum's total membership (excluding observers – see paragraph 58). A representative of providers of 16-19 education must be elected from those providers. This includes those in the FE sector (FE and sixth form colleges) and other post-school institutions that specialise in special education needs (SPNs), where 20% or more of their students reside in the local authority's area. As with academies the providers are probably best placed to determine the election process.

46. The local authority must appoint at least one person to represent early years providers from the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. Early years PVI settings need to be represented because funding for the free entitlement for three and

four year olds and eligible two year olds comes from the Dedicated Schools Grant, and all settings are funded through the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF).

47. Before appointing additional non-schools members to the schools forum, the local authority must consider whether the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses situated in the local authority's area; and, where there are schools or academies in the area with a different religious character, the appropriate faith group, should be represented on the schools forum. If diocesan authorities nominate members for appointment as non-schools members they may wish to consider what type of representative would be most appropriate – schools-based such as a headteacher or governor, or someone linked more generally with the diocese, e.g. a member of the education board.

48. It is also good practice for local authorities to ensure that the needs and interests of all the pupils in the local authority are adequately represented by the members of a schools forum. The interests of pupils in maintained schools can be represented by schools members. Some pupils in a local authority, however, are not in maintained schools but instead are educated in hospitals, independent special schools and non-maintained special schools. Certain types of non-schools members can play an important role in representing the interests of these groups of pupils. They can also play a role in representing the interests and views of the services that support those groups of vulnerable and at-risk pupils who nevertheless are on the roll of maintained schools, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs.

49. The purpose of non-schools members is also to bring greater breadth of discussion to schools forum meetings and ensure that stakeholders and partners other than schools are represented. Organisations which typically provide non-schools members are trades unions, professional associations and representatives of youth groups. Parent groups could also be considered. However, as there are clearly limited numbers of non-schools members able to be on a schools forum, care should be taken to ensure that an appropriate representation from wider stakeholders is achieved.

## Other membership issues

50. There are three restrictions placed on who can be a non-schools member of a schools forum. The local authority cannot appoint:

- an elected member of the local authority who is appointed to the executive of that local authority (a lead member/portfolio holder) 'executive members',
- the Director of Children's Services or any officer employed or engaged to work under the management of the Director of Children's Services, and who does not directly provide education to children (or manage those who do) ('relevant officer' (a) and (b)),
- other officers with a specific role in management of and/or who advise on funding for schools ('relevant officer' part (c)).

51. Schools forums have the power to approve a limited range of proposals from their local authority: the restrictions ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the proposing body (the local authority) and the approving body (the schools forum).

52. However, non-executive elected members and those officers who are employed in their capacity as headteachers or teachers and those who directly manage a service which provides education to individual children and/or advice to schools on, for example, learning and behavioural matters are eligible to be members of schools forums.

53. In the case of non-executive elected members, they may be a schools member (by virtue of them being a school governor), an academies member or a non-schools member. As a non-schools member they may be well placed to fulfil the broader overview and scrutiny role they have within the local authority in general.

54. However, the inclusion of non-executive elected members and certain officers is not a requirement. Many schools forums do not have such members on them and it is for each local authority and schools forum to consider how best to ensure the right balance of school and non-school representation on the schools forum, taking into account their local circumstances and preferences.

## **The role of executive elected members**

55. A schools forum needs to ensure that there are systems in place for executive members of the Council to be aware of its views on specific issues and, in particular, any decisions it takes in relation to the Schools Budget and individual budget shares.

56. Executive members with responsibility for education/children's services or resources of the local authority are able to participate in schools forum meetings. By doing so such elected members are able to contribute to the discussion and receive first-hand the views of the schools forum: it is clearly good practice for this to be the case and the regulations provide the right for executive members to attend and speak at schools forum meetings. However, there is no requirement for this to happen so at the very least there should be clear channels of communication between the schools forum and executive members. Communication may also be assisted if schools forum members attended relevant Cabinet meetings as members of the public, e.g. when the funding formula is decided.

## **Recording the composition of schools forums**

57. Each local authority must make a written record of the composition of its schools forum detailing the numbers of schools members and by which group or sub-group they were elected, the number of academies members and the number of non-schools members, their terms of office, how they were chosen and whom they represent. This record should also indicate the term of office for schools and academies members. It

would be helpful if this were published on the schools forum website so schools and wider stakeholders can easily find who their representatives are.

## Observers

58. The Regulations provide that the Secretary of State can appoint an observer to attend and speak at schools forum meetings, e.g. a representative from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). This allows a conduit for national policy to be discussed at a local level and provide access for schools forum to an additional support mechanism, e.g. where there are highly complex issues to resolve.

## Participation of local authority officers at meetings

59. Only specific officers can speak at meetings of the schools forum. These officers are:

- Director of Children's Services or their representative
- Chief Financial Officer or their representative
- Any person invited by the schools forum to provide financial or technical advice
- Any person presenting a paper to the schools forum but their ability to speak is limited to the paper that they are presenting.

60. In the majority of cases schools forums are supported by a specific officer. In the course of their work, however, schools forums will be required to consider a whole range of issues and they may consider it appropriate that other officers attend for specific items of business. Where this is the case, the local authority should meet the schools forum's requests as far as possible.

## Procedures

61. Many procedural matters are not prescribed in the regulations and are at the discretion either of the local authority or the schools forum itself. However, there are requirements in the regulations relating to:

- **Quorum:** A meeting is only quorate if 40% of the total membership is present (this excludes any observers, and it is 40% of the current membership excluding vacancies). If a meeting is inquorate it can proceed but it cannot legally take decisions (e.g. election of a Chair, or a decision relating to funding conferred by the funding regulations). An inquorate meeting can respond to local authority consultation, and give views to the local authority. It would normally be good practice for the local authority to take account of such 'unofficial' views, but it is not legally obliged to do so. In practice, the arrangements for meetings should be made to reduce the chance of a problem with the quorum. The quorum stipulation is in the regulations to help ensure the legitimacy of decisions;

- **Election of a Chair:** Under the Regulations, if the position of Chair falls vacant the schools forum must decide how long the term of office of the next Chair will be. This can be for any period, but the schools forum should consider carefully whether a period exceeding two years is sensible. A long period will also cause problems if the member elected as Chair has a term of office as a member which comes to an end before their term of office as Chair ends. The schools forum must elect a Chair from amongst its own members, so it is not possible to elect an independent Chair. In addition any elected member of the local authority or officer of the local authority who is a member of a schools forum may not hold the office of Chair. Schools forums can also appoint to a position of vice Chair to provide cover if the Chair is absent or the post vacant;
- **Voting procedures:** The Regulations provide that a schools forum may determine its own voting procedures save that voting on:
  - the funding formula is limited to schools members, academies members and PVI representatives
  - de-delegation will be limited to the specific primary and secondary phase of maintained schools members.
- **The powers which schools forums** have to take decisions on a range of funding matters increase the importance of clear procedures, e.g. decisions are made on a simple majority or the threshold to be met if higher. These procedures should take account of any use of working groups by the schools forum – for example a decision might be taken by voting to accept and adopt a report by a working group (see paragraph 65). As part of any voting procedure there should be clarity in the procedures for recording the outcome of a vote, and any resolutions a schools forum makes in relation to any vote taken;
- **Substitutes:** The local authority must make arrangements to enable substitutes to attend and vote (where appropriate) at schools forum meetings. This applies to schools members, academies members and non-schools members. The arrangements must be decided in consultation with schools forum members.
- **Defects and vacancies:** The Regulations provide that proceedings of the schools forum are not invalidated by defects in the election or appointment of any member, or the appointment of the Chair. Nor does the existence of any vacancy on the schools forum invalidate proceedings (see paragraph 61 on quorum).
- **Timing:** schools forums must meet at least four times a year

62. Where the regulations make no provision on a procedural matter, local discretion should be exercised. It is for the local authority to decide how far it wishes to establish rules for the schools forum to follow, in the form of standing orders. While it is entitled to do so, it is of course good practice to allow the schools forum to set its own rules so far as possible.

## Public access

63. Schools forums are more than just consultative bodies. They also have an important role to play in approving certain proposals from their local authority and are therefore involved in the decision making process surrounding the use of public money at local level. As a result schools forums are required to be open to the public. Furthermore papers, agendas and minutes must be publicly available well in advance of each meeting. It is good practice that notification that the schools forum is a public meeting is included on the website and papers are published at least a week in advance. Local authorities should ensure that the websites are accessible and easy to find.

64. Some schools forums already operate very much along the lines of a local authority committee. This is perfectly legitimate and will provide a consistent framework for the running of meetings that are open to the public, and the publishing of papers and agendas well in advance of the meeting and minutes published promptly as required under Regulation 8(13) of the Schools Forum Regulations 2012.

## Working groups

65. It is open to a schools forum to set up working groups of members to discuss specific issues, and to produce draft advice and decisions for the schools forum itself to consider. The groups can also include wider representation - for example, an early years reference group can represent all the different types of provider to consider the detail of the early years single funding formula. The reference group would then be able to give its considered view on the local authority's proposals to the schools forum. The schools forum should not delegate actual decisions or the finalisation of advice to a working group, as this may have the effect of excluding legitimate points of view.

## Urgent business

66. It is good practice for the local authority to agree with its schools forum an urgency procedure to be followed when there is a genuine business need for a decision or formal view to be expressed by the schools forum, before the next scheduled meeting. The local authority may of course call an unscheduled meeting; but it may also wish to put in place alternative arrangements such as clearance by email correspondence or some other means. Such instances should be avoided so far as possible but are legitimate provided all members of the schools forum have an opportunity to participate, the logistics provide a reasonable opportunity for consideration and the local authority policy on data security is not compromised.

67. It is not legal for the Chair to take a decision on behalf of the schools forum, no matter how urgent the matter in question; but a schools forum may wish to put in place a procedure for the Chair to give the local authority a view on an urgent issue.



## Resources of the schools forum

68. The costs of a schools forum fall in the centrally retained budget portion of the Schools Block of local authorities.

69. It is legitimate to charge the running costs of schools forums to this budget including any agreed and reasonable expenses for members attending meetings, the costs of producing and distributing papers and costs room hire and refreshments and for clerking of meetings. Beyond these costs some schools forums have a budget of their own to use for activities such as commissioning research or other reports. The [2014 School and Early Years Finance Regulations](#) provide that the level of resource devoted to running schools forums in 2015-16 is limited to 2014-15 levels unless the Secretary of State agrees an increase.

## Section 2 – effective schools forums

### Introduction

70. As the previous section outlined, local authorities have responsibility for establishing schools forums. They also have an ongoing responsibility to provide them with appropriate support, information and guidance in carrying out their functions and responsibilities.

71. The following outlines some aspects of what local authorities and schools forums should consider in ensuring that their schools forums are as effective as possible. The pace of academy conversions in particular means that this significant sector must be properly represented and feel that it is able to play a meaningful part in the discussions of the schools forum.

72. Central to the effectiveness or otherwise of a schools forum will be the relationship between it and its local authority. The local authority will have a significant influence on this: the support it provides; the resources it devotes and the weight it gives to the views of schools forums all contribute to the nature of the relationship. There are therefore a number of characteristics of this relationship that are particularly important:

- Partnership: Having a shared understanding of the priorities, issues and concerns of schools, academies and the local authority.
- Effective Support: The business of the schools forum is supported by the local authority in an efficient and professional manner.
- Openness: It is important that a schools forum feels it is receiving open, honest and objective advice from its local authority.
- Responsiveness: Local authorities should as far as possible be responsive to requests from their schools forums and their members. Schools forums themselves should also be aware of the resource implications of their requests.
- Strategic view: Members of schools forum should consider the needs of the whole of the educational community, rather than using their position on a schools forum to advance their own sectional or specific interests.
- Challenge and Scrutiny: schools forums may be asked to agree to proposals from their local authority that will have an effect on all schools and academies in the local area. The extent to which schools forums can scrutinise and challenge such proposals is an important aspect of their effectiveness.

73. The characteristics identified above are just some of the aspects that will contribute to an effective schools forum. The following provides more detail on some of the specific issues that local authorities and schools forums may wish to consider in thinking about their own arrangements.

## Induction of new members

74. When new members join the schools forum appropriate induction materials should be provided. These might include material relating to the operation of the schools forum together with background information about the local and national school funding arrangements. Typically they might comprise:

- the constitution of the schools forum
- a list of members including contact details and their terms of office
- any locally agreed terms of reference explaining the relationship between the schools forum and the local authority
- copies of minutes of previous meetings
- the programme of schools forum meetings for the year
- the local schools forum web address

75. This Operational and Good Practice Guide, suitably supplemented by local material, should also be provided to new members on their appointment.

76. Where there is sufficient turnover of schools forum members in any particular year the local authority may wish to organise a one-off induction event to brief new members. Such an event would usefully include an outline of the role of the schools forum and the national funding arrangements for schools and local authorities. It might also include an explanation of the local funding formula and any proposals for review. The opportunity could also be taken to explain the main reporting requirements for school and local authority expenditure.

## Training

77. Ideally schools forum members should be able to use some of the budget set aside for schools forum running costs for accessing relevant training activities. Some training will be provided by officers of the local authority but members may wish to attend national or regional events, the costs of which, where necessary, can be supported from the schools forum budget. Local and national bodies have a key role to play in developing the competencies of forum members.

78. Training will need to be provided in response to any changes in the role of the schools forum and national developments in respect of school funding.

## Agenda setting

79. The process by which the agenda for a meeting or cycle of meetings is set is in many respects one of the key determinants of the effectiveness or otherwise of a schools forum.

80. The frequency and timing of meetings of the schools forum should be agreed in advance of each financial or academic year. In drawing up this cycle of meetings, in

consultation with the schools forum, the local authority should provide a clear overview of the key consultative and decision-making points in the school funding cycle. These will be drawn from a combination of national and local information and should inform the basic agenda items that each meeting needs to cover. For instance meetings will need to be scheduled at appropriate points to enable the schools forum to consider the outcomes of local consultations and national announcements.

81. Although the business of schools forums must be open and transparent, it is recognised that from time to time items of a confidential nature will need to be discussed. It is recommended that authorities apply the same principles that they apply to Council/Cabinet meetings when judging an item to be confidential and adopt similar practices for dealing with those reports in the meeting, e.g. placing them together at the end of the agenda.

## **Preparation for a schools forum meeting**

82. It is vital that the schools forum is transparent, open and has clear communication lines to all of the members that are represented. This ensures the wider school family are aware of the business discussed, the impact on their setting and the reasons for the decisions.

83. The vast majority of a schools forum's business will be transacted on the basis of prepared papers. It is therefore important that these are concise, informative and produced in a timely and consistent manner. Recommendations should be clearly set out at the beginning of each report. It is also helpful if the front of the report confirms whether the report is for information or decision and who is eligible to vote where relevant.

84. It is good practice for the schools forum and local authority to agree a standard for papers. It is usual for papers to be dispatched at least one week prior to the meeting at which they will be discussed to allow members to consider them and if necessary canvass views from the group they are representing. Papers should be published on the local authority's website at this time to enable representations to be made to schools forum members.

85. Consistency in the presentation of papers also contributes to the effectiveness of meetings: it helps set the tone of meetings, facilitate the engagement of all members and signal the importance the local authority attaches to the work of the schools forum. Ideally such a standard should be agreed between the schools forum and local authority. The publishing of papers as a single pdf file is helpful as it saves time and avoids accessing multiple documents both in advance of, and during, the meeting. An Executive Summary of the reports can provide schools forum members and members of the public with an overview of the agenda and the decisions required.

86. The publishing of papers on a publicly available website well in advance of the meeting ensures that all interested parties are able to access papers. Some schools forums ensure that each represented group meets in the days immediately prior to the

schools forum meeting to ensure the agenda is discussed and schools forum members are properly briefed by the group they represent. Although on occasions it is inevitable that schools forums will receive late, or tabled reports it does create some difficulty for members as they will not have been able to seek the views of those they represent.

87. Schools forums can consider adopting a flexible arrangement for time immediately prior to the meeting. For example it could be used for training of new members, or as a drop-in session for members to ask items of clarification, or for members to meet without officers to discuss the agenda.

## **Chairing the schools forum**

88. The Chair of a schools forum plays a key role in setting the tone, pace and overall dynamic of the schools forum. They should provide an environment within which all members are able to contribute fully to discussions and guide the schools forum to making well informed decisions.

89. The relationship between the Chair and the local authority is therefore vital. The Chair should be very clear on the substance of the agenda items, understand the issues involved and the decisions and/or actions that need to be taken in respect of School Forum business. It is good practice for there to be a pre-meeting between the senior officer of the local authority supporting the schools forum and the Chair of the schools forum to ensure that all the issues are clearly understood.

90. Equally, the Chair has the responsibility of representing the views of the schools forum back to the local authority: for instance, they should, where appropriate, take the initiative to make suggestions for improvements to the way the business is conducted, and, in exceptional cases and with support of the members of the schools forum take the view that they do not have sufficient information on which to base a decision and ask that an item is deferred until further information is available. However, in doing so, the Chair and schools forum should be fully aware of the consequences of deferral.

91. The independence of the schools forum is paramount. Enhancing the role of Chair to a paid position, rather than the reimbursement of reasonable expenses, could blur the lines of independence. Similarly, if the Chair undertakes significant work for the LA in another capacity, e.g. as an external consultant, they could be viewed as equivalent to an officer of the local authority.

92. Local authorities could consider if sharing contact details of the schools forum Chair with neighbouring authorities would be helpful for peer support and improving networking opportunities.

## **Clerking the schools forum**

93. Clerking of a schools forum should be seen as more than just writing a note of the meeting. A good clerk provides an invaluable link between the members of the schools

forum, the Chair and the local authority. It is a role often undertaken by an employee of the local authority though we would recommend consideration is given to the use of an independent clerk.

94. Clerks should manage the logistics of the meeting in terms of ensuring dispatch of papers and producing a note from the meeting. In considering the style of meeting notes consideration should be given to making them intelligible enough for non-attendees to get a sense of the discussion as well as clearly indicating the conclusion and action agreed in relation to each agenda item. Verbatim reports of a schools forum's discussion, however, are unlikely to be very useful. Schools forums may consider whether a simple action log should be maintained by the clerk to ensure all action points agreed are followed up.

95. Beyond this a good clerk can:

- provide the route by which schools forum members can access further information and co-ordinate communication to schools forum members outside of the formal meeting cycle;
- respond to any queries about the business of the schools forum from headteachers, governors and others who are not on the schools forum themselves;
- be responsible for ensuring contact details of all members are up to date;
- maintain the list of members on the schools forum and advise on membership issues in general;
- assist with the co-ordination of nomination/election processes run by the constituent groups;
- keep the schools forum website up to date: e.g. by posting latest minutes and papers etc;
- monitor, on a regular basis, the schools forum and general Schools Funding section of the Department for Education (DfE) website or the gov.uk website; and arrange for the distribution of any relevant DfE information to schools forum members;
- if appropriate, provide technical advice in relation to the schools forum regulations and in relation to the operation of a schools forum's local constitution; and
- organise, operate and record any voting activity of the schools forum in line with the provisions of its local constitution.

96. Not all of these tasks may be able to be undertaken by the schools forum clerk. However, each one is important and there should be arrangements in place to ensure they are discharged adequately.

## **Good practice for schools forum meetings**

97. Schools forums should ensure there is a clear debate of all agenda items. Whilst sub-group meetings are valuable in working through detailed issues, schools forums

should consider that the level of debate held at the schools forum meeting and recorded in the minutes will be the official reflection of the level of challenge and discussion on each issue.

98. The use of nameplates for schools forum members also showing which group they are representing can be helpful to members of the public and presenters of papers. In addition the use of coloured cards or coloured nameplates can be helpful when specific members of a schools forum are eligible to vote on specific items, e.g. de-delegation or changes to the funding formula.

99. Consultations with the schools forum are a key responsibility of a local authority, ranging from the funding formula to the letting of contracts. Each consultation will be different and depend on the subject being consulted on, but local authorities should consider the following factors as good practice for effective consultation:

- Plan and consult early
- Allow reasonable timescales for response (as Forum members may need to consult the groups they represent)
- An open and honest approach
- Fully inclusive
- Allow for ongoing dialogue
- Provide feedback
- Clear communications.

## **Meeting notes and recording of decisions**

100. A vital part of the effective operation of a schools forum is to ensure that an accurate record of the meeting is taken. This must include the clear recording of votes where there are contrary views. Recommendations to, and decisions of, schools forums must be clearly set out.

101. Notes or minutes of each schools forum meeting should be produced and put on the website as soon after the meeting as possible to enable members and others to see the outcome of any discussions and decisions/votes. It is good practice to formally agree the accuracy of the note/minutes at a subsequent meeting but the publication of the draft minutes should not be delayed as a result.

102. In order to provide clarity about representation at each meeting, it is good practice for the minutes to record the group and/or subgroup that each member represents against their name.

## **Communication**

103. Communication to the wider educational community of the discussions and debates of, and decisions made by, the schools forum is fundamental to their effective operation. The more schools and other stakeholders know about the proceedings of the

schools forum, the more their work will be an important and central part of the context of local educational funding. This is particularly important given the decision making role that the schools forum has. Local authorities should consider the operational differences between the types of stakeholders and plan their communications accordingly. For example ensuring effective communications across the PVI sector may be more difficult than with schools, who are more likely to have existing channels of communication e.g. headteacher meetings.

104. Each schools forum should therefore be clear what its channels of communication are. It is fundamental that each member of schools forum represents the views of the group or sub-group that they represent and that all those with an interest in funding work together to ensure that their views are taken into account. Therefore communications directly between members and those they represent is essential; professional associations and phase groups could be suitable channels. This will ensure that schools forum members have an ongoing dialogue with the constituents of their group or sub-group and are therefore well able to represent their views at schools forum meetings. However, the schools forum should also consider additional communication processes. These could include:

- drawing schools' attention to the fact that all its agenda, minutes and papers are publicly available on the local authority's website (this should include the publication of formula consultation documents);
- an annual report on the proceedings of the schools forum;
- attendance by the Chair, or other schools forum member, at other relevant consultative or management groups such as any capital working group; or senior management meetings of the Children's Services Department; or
- a brief email to all schools, early years providers and other stakeholders after each schools forum meeting informing them of the discussions and decisions with a link to the full papers and minutes for further information
- a schools forum newsletter can be a less formal and more interesting way of communicating forum business and raising the profile of the schools forum and its members.

## News updates

105. Most, but not all, members of the schools forum will already be in receipt of regular information on school funding matters from the local authority and DfE. Other schools forum members should be copied into such information flows so that they can be kept abreast of developments between meetings.

106. Many local authorities have already established dedicated schools forum websites on which they post key information for schools forum members and other interested parties.





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## Schools forum powers and responsibilities 2015 to 2016

A summary of the powers and responsibilities of schools forums.

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
Formula change (including redistributions)	Proposes and decides	Must be consulted [voting restrictions apply - see schools forum structure document] and informs the governing bodies of all consultations	Checks for compliance with regulations
Contracts (where the LA is entering a contract to be funded from the schools budget)	Proposes at least one month prior to invitation to tender, the terms of any proposed contract	Gives a view and informs the governing bodies of all consultations	None
Financial issues relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and</li> </ul>	Consults annually	Gives a view and informs the governing bodies of all consultations	None

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
<p>the arrangements for paying top-up funding;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• arrangements for early years provision;</li> <li>• administration arrangements for the allocation of central government grants</li> </ul>			
Minimum funding guarantee (MFG)	Proposes any exclusions from MFG for application to DfE	Gives a view	Approval
<p>De-delegation for mainstream schools for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contingencies</li> <li>• administration of free school meals</li> <li>• insurance</li> <li>• licences/subscriptions</li> <li>• staff costs – supply cover</li> <li>• support for minority ethnic</li> <li>• pupils/underachieving groups</li> <li>• behaviour support services</li> <li>• library and museum services</li> </ul>	Proposes	Primary and secondary school member representatives will decide for their phase. Middle schools are treated according to their deemed status	Will adjudicate where schools forum does not agree LA proposal

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
<p>Central spend on and the criteria for allocating funding from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growth fund (to meet requirements for basic need including pre-opening and diseconomy of scale costs)</li> <li>falling rolls fund for surplus places in good or outstanding schools where a population bulge is expected in 2-3 years</li> </ul>	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
<p>Central spend on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>equal pay back-pay</li> <li>places in independent schools for non-SEN pupils</li> <li>early years expenditure</li> </ul>	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
<p>Central spend on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>admissions</li> <li>servicing of schools forum</li> </ul>	Proposes up to the value committed in 2014-15	Decides for each line	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
<p>Central spend on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capital expenditure funded from revenue</li> <li>contribution to combined budgets</li> <li>schools budget centrally funded termination of employment costs</li> </ul>	Proposes up to the value committed in 2014-15 and where expenditure has already been committed.	Decides for each line	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal

Function	Local authority	Schools forum	DfE role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>schools budget funded prudential borrowing costs</li> <li>special education needs transport costs</li> </ul>			
Central spend on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>licences negotiated centrally by the Secretary of State</li> <li>children and young people with high needs</li> </ul>	Decides	None, but good practice to inform forum	None
Carry forward a deficit on central expenditure to the next year to be funded from the schools budget	Proposes	Decides	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
Scheme of financial management changes	Proposes and consults the governing body and Head of every school	Approves (schools members only)	Adjudicates where schools forum does not agree LA proposal
Membership: length of office of members	Decides	None (but good practice would suggest that they gave a view)	None
Voting procedures	None	Determine voting procedures	None
Chair of schools forum	Facilitates	Elects ( <i>may not be an elected member of the Council or officer</i> )	None



## Schools forums structure

A summary of the structure of schools forums.

Category	Schools members	Academies members	Non-school members
Represented groups	<p>Where the LA maintains the following types of school, they must be represented on the schools forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary Schools</li> <li>• Secondary Schools</li> <li>• Special Schools</li> <li>• Nursery Schools</li> <li>• PRUs</li> </ul>	<p>At least one academies member must be a representative of mainstream academies, which includes free schools, UTCs and Studio Schools. In addition, there must be one member for each of the following groups (if such exist in the LA area):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special academies, including free schools</li> <li>• Alternative provision academies, including free schools</li> </ul>	<p>16-19 providers</p> <p>Early years Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers</p> <p>Before considering other groups, the LA must consider diocesan representation</p>

Category	Schools members	Academies members	Non-school members
Type of member	<p>Within each of the five groups above there could be the following types of member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headteachers (or their representative)</li> <li>• Governors</li> <li>• Headteachers and Governors</li> <li>• In overall terms there must be at least one headteacher (or their representative) and one governor</li> </ul>	Any	Any
Schools forum structure	<p>Schools members and academies members must comprise at least 2/3rds of the schools forum membership</p> <p>Primary schools, secondary schools and academies must be broadly proportionately represented on schools forum, based on the total number of pupils registered at them</p>	<p>Schools members and academies members must comprise at least 2/3rds of the schools forum membership</p> <p>Primary schools, secondary schools and academies must be broadly proportionately represented on schools forum, based on the total number of pupils registered at them</p>	
Voting	Only primary representatives can	No voting on de-delegation or the	No voting on de-delegation or the



Category	Schools members	Academies members	Non-school members
	<p>vote on primary school de-delegation</p> <p>Only secondary representatives can vote on secondary school de-delegation</p> <p>All schools members can vote on the scheme for financing schools</p> <p>All schools members can vote on any other schools forum business, including the consultation on the funding formula</p>	<p>scheme for financing schools</p> <p>All academies members can vote on any other schools forum business, including the consultation on the funding formula</p>	<p>scheme for financing schools</p> <p>Only PVI representatives can vote on the consultation on the funding formula.</p> <p>All non-school members can vote on any other schools forum business</p>
Elected by	<p>The relevant sub-group of the relevant type of school e.g. primary school governor representatives are elected by the governors of primary schools, secondary school headteachers are elected by the headteachers of secondary schools.</p>	<p>The relevant proprietors of academies elect for their group, e.g. mainstream academies, special academies and alternative provision academies</p>	<p>Election only applies to the representative for the 16-19 providers, who is elected by all eligible 16-19 providers</p>
LA appointment of members	<p>Only if no election takes place by the agreed date or in the event of a tie</p>	<p>Only if no election takes place by the agreed date or in the event of a tie</p>	<p>Can appoint a 16-19 representative only if no election takes place by the agreed date or in the event of a tie</p> <p>For all other non-schools members</p>

Category	Schools members	Academies members	Non-school members
			the LA appoints, but it is good practice to seek nominations from the relevant bodies

**Other attendees who are permitted to contribute to a schools forum meeting:**

- An observer appointed by the Secretary of State
- The Chief Financial Officer
- The Director of Children’s Services
- Officers providing financial & technical advice to schools forum
- The Executive Member for Children’s Services
- Presenters (restricted to the paper they are presenting)
- The Executive Member with responsibility for resources

# Agenda Item 12

## **SCHOOLS' FORUM & HEADS FUNDING GROUP**

### **FORWARD PLAN 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

(reports to be submitted to [schoolsforum@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsforum@westberks.gov.uk) and be in the standard report format for these groups)

<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2015 (Wednesday) - HEADS FUNDING GROUP</b>			
<b>REPORT DEADLINE is Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June at 12 noon</b>			
School Formula 2016/17	Review the Government's arrangements for school funding in 2016/17 and consider options for the school formula for 2016/17 to make a proposal to Schools Forum	Claire White	
De-Delegations 2016/17	Review de-delegations and buy back arrangements for 2016/17 and make a proposal to Schools Forum	Shannon Coleman Slaughter	
School Budgets 2015/16	Review of school budgets set for 2015/16 and schools in financial difficulty	Claire white	
PRU funding proposals for 2016/17	Detailed proposal to delegate all PRU top up funding out to schools to commission their own arrangements	Cathy Burnham	
PRU Outreach and Home Tuition Budgets	Review of these two service budgets at Schools' Forum request	Cathy Burnham	
Scheme for Financing Schools	Proposals to amend scheme, mainly in relation to school balances	Claire White	
<b>13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2015 (Monday) - SCHOOLS FORUM</b>			
<b>REPORT DEADLINE is Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July at 12 noon</b>			
School Formula 2016/17	Review the Government's arrangements for school funding in 2016/17 and agree on a proposed formula for 2016/17 to go out to consultation with schools	Claire White	
De-Delegations 2016/17	Agree a proposal for de-delegations and buy back arrangements for 2016/17 to go out to consultation with schools	Shannon Coleman Slaughter	
School Budgets 2015/16	Review of school budgets set for 2015/16 and schools in financial difficulty	Claire white	
PRU funding proposals for 2016/17	Agree proposal to delegate all PRU top up funding out to schools to commission their own arrangements to go out to consultation with schools	Cathy Burnham	
PRU Outreach and Home Tuition Budgets	Review of these two service budgets at Schools' Forum request	Cathy Burnham	
Scheme for Financing Schools	Agree proposals to amend scheme, mainly in relation to school balances, to go out to consultation with schools	Claire White	
School Forum Membership and Constitution	Review and agree Schools' Forum membership and constitution from September 2015	School Forum Clerk	

<b>16<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015 (Wednesday) - HEADS FUNDING GROUP</b>			
<b>REPORT DEADLINE is Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September at 12 noon</b>			
School Formula 2016/17	Final review of the school formula for 2016/17 taking into account responses to consultation and make proposal to Schools Forum	Claire White	
De-Delegations 2016/17	Final review of de-delegations and buy back arrangements for 2016/17 taking into account responses to consultation and make a proposal to Schools Forum	Shannon Coleman Slaughter	
Additional Funding criteria 2016/17	Review additional funding criteria and make proposals for any changes to Schools' Forum	Claire white	
High Needs Budget 2016/17	Review high needs places and arrangements for 2016/17	Jane Seymour	
Engaging Potential Budget	Review Engaging Potential savings being met, and tender proposals	Jane Seymour	
Scheme for Financing Schools	Make final proposals to Schools' Forum to amend scheme, taking into account responses to consultation	Claire White	
<b>28<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015 (Monday) - SCHOOLS FORUM</b>			
<b>REPORT DEADLINE is Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 12 noon</b>			
Election of Chair and Vice Chair		Ian Pearson	
School Formula 2016/17	Final review of the school formula for 2016/17 taking into account responses to consultation and recommendation from HFG and make proposal to Council's Executive	Claire White	
De-Delegations 2016/17	Agree de-delegations and buy back arrangements for 2016/17 taking into account responses to consultation	Shannon Coleman Slaughter	
Additional Funding criteria 2016/17	Agree additional funding criteria for 2016/17	Claire white	
High Needs Budget 2016/17	Review high needs places and arrangements for 2016/17	Jane Seymour	
Engaging Potential Budget	Review Engaging Potential savings being met, and tender proposals	Jane Seymour	
Scheme for Financing Schools	Agree changes to Scheme, taking into account responses to consultation	Claire White	
DSG Monitoring 2015/16 month 5	Review of current year budget and whether savings are being achieved	Shannon Coleman Slaughter	