

SCHOOL FORUM MINUTES

-: Present: -

Lisa Finn (Vice-Chair) Secondary Academy Rep; **Jim Piper**, Primary Academy Deputy Head; **Alex Newton**, Secondary Maintained Head; **Steven Hulme**, PRU; **Mike Lock**, Special Schools Head; **Sarah Tomkinson**, Primary Maintained Head; **Rob Parr**, Principal Accountant; **Dan Hamer**, Head of Vulnerable Pupils; **Hannah Spencer**, Head of SEND Improvement; **Jim Piper**, Primary Academy; **Tim Stephens**, Early Years

-: Also in attendance: -

Rachael Williams, Divisional Director for Education, Learning and Skills; **Nancy Meehan**, Director of Children Services, Susan Kemp, Clerk

Lisa has agreed to Chair the meeting in Stewart's absence.

1. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair asked members to vote on whether School Forum can exclude the press and public from the meeting prior to consideration of the sensitive and confidential Safety Valve agenda item.

A vote was taken which was unanimously agreed that School Forum will exclude the press and public from this part of meeting due to the Safety Valve agenda item which is sensitive and confidential.

2. Apologies/Changes to Membership

Stewart Biddles (Chair) Primary Academy; Jayne Jones, Early Years, Steve Margetts, Secondary Academy, Michael Freeman, Clerk, Martin Phillips, Director of Finance; Clive Star, Secondary Academy, Kelly Sooben, South Devon College. Rachael has taken steps to fill the primary representative.

3. Minutes of last meeting

Members agreed that the last minutes 26/06/22 to be an accurate record of the meeting and reviewed the actions taken.

Follow up actions from last meeting:

- Action – Officers to predict cost of bespoke packages to be discuss at October Meeting – due to meeting being stepped down this will be an agenda item in January 2023.
- Action – SEN officers to talk to EY providers around parental RSAs. – work progressing
- Action – Officers to share WSOA targets with colleagues at SENCO Forum. Meeting planned for 8th December.
- Action – Officers to share presentation with colleagues in TAPS/TASH to ensure appropriate membership and contributions. Completed

Attendees gave reassurances that nobody else was present in the virtual meeting for the private discussion agenda item.

4. Safety Valve Discussion

Nancy Meehan Director of Children's Services gave an overview of the aspects discussed within the DSG Management Plan in July with the ESFA financial management team. Following a significant amount of work around data analysis the Finance Management team were impressed with our knowledge and understanding of the level of understand we had of our children. The DSG Management plan delivery success is built upon changing culture and practice, this will be achieved through the delivery of our local area written statement of action for SEND, our change in practice to Family Hubs and different way of working across partnership agencies.

She highlighted the primary area of need that the Local Area continues to have higher representation than those seen nationally and regionally for SLCN, SEMH, MLD and ASC. Work will progress to lessen the reliance for the need for an EHCP, review existing plans and where appropriate through targeted work cease plans.

Further work will progress to -

- Pool Section 75 budgets to reduce the number of children on a waiting list
- Use SENK support to assist young people
- SEND being an integral part of family hubs supporting early years through the home learning environment and outreach speech and language
- Health to contribution to EHCP where child has an underlying medical need or a school is paying for specialist nursing which should be sourced by health.

Nancy in response to a question about the long-term historic lack of financial contribution from NHS said that it has been made clear to the Chief Nurse that the higher needs funding block will not be funding medical needs in EHCPs. The Chief Nurse now sits on the SEND Strategic Board and Rachael reported that Hannah Pugliese is collaborating directly with us on the joint commissioning work.

School Forum noted that there is a health representative on Tribunal cases and is held accountable for any health needs of the child.

School Forum noted the data analysis with the Safety Valve recovery plan and that aspects of need may not change.

Rachael highlighted the altered trajectory of growth and targeted prevention for statutory assessment, ceasing of plans and increase of enhanced resource provision.

School Forum noted the remodelling of the diagnostic pathway for neurodiversity and that it will take time to resolve the large waiting plans.

Rachael reported that there is a dashboard to track progress and hold officers accountable to lack of progress in targeted actions.

In response to how to measure impact at school level Rachael responded by: -

- Moving forward Post 16 providers change to deal with 11 – 15 provisions
- Prevention and engagement within family hubs
- Creating helplines within family hubs for SEND

Rachael emphasised the importance of engaging the schools into the Safety Valve Recovery plan. A meeting will be prioritised in January 2023 to roll out the spread of information. TASH will add an agenda item in January about the Safety Valve Recovery Plan.

The Chair asked for School Forum to give their principal support to the proposed plan.

School Forum unanimously agreed to the proposed Safety Valve Recovery Plan.

5. Financial Report

It was agreed to defer this item for more detailed discussion at the next School Forum meeting in January 2023.

6. De-Delegation Decisions

School Forum noted the reason the de-delegation and centrally retained decision for 2023/24 were being proposed for consideration.

- Maintained schools voted on the de-delegation items on behalf of the phase of schools
- All schools and academies voted on centrally retained items

Both maintained schools and all schools/academies voted to unanimously support the proposals.

7. Review of Notional SEN Allocations

Rachael shared the October new operational guidance for the review of the Notional SEN Allocation.

School Forum considered how local decisions compared with the new guidance and agreed that School Forum should continue with its current practice.

8. Any Other Business

School Forum agreed that the next meeting on 19th January 2023 will be virtual and not face to face. In the future School Forum meetings will be face to face every other meeting or as agreed by the Forum.