

Schools Forum Meeting held on the 14th May 2015 at The Avenue

PRESENT

Peter Kayes	Governor, Redlands - CHAIR
Charles Clare	Headteacher, Geoffrey Fields Junior
Viv Angus	Headteacher, Reading Girls School
Isabelle Sandy	School Business Manager, Kendrick
Justine McMinn	Headteacher, EP Collier
Lisa Bedlow	Headteacher, Caversham and Newbridge nurseries
John Cosgrove	Headteacher, Christ the King (RC) School
Cathy Doberska	Headteacher, New Christchurch
Phil Davies	Headteacher - Prospect School
Sue Bourne	Headteacher - The Avenue

RBC

Steve Davies	Finance
Alan Cross	Finance
Kevin McDaniel	RBC

GUESTS

Margot Buller	Executive Headteacher, St Martins
Bridget Jones	Head of School, St Martins

APOLOGIES

Russell Dyer	Finance
Paul Woodward	Councillor
Marianne Best	Headteacher, Cranbury College
Joan Boyd	NUT
Lee Smith	Headteacher, Holy Brook
Karen Hillier	Governor, Caversham
Marianne Best	Head, Cranbury College
Anne Higginbotham	Headteacher, St Michaels
Julie Kempster	PVI Sector under 5's, Riverside Day Nursery
Rachel Cave	Headteacher, Highdown

ABSENT

Ashley Robson	Headteacher- Reading School
Nicola Maytum	Headteacher, JMA

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- Welcome
- Apologies noted

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH MARCH 2015

Minutes agreed by Schools Forum

- Belated apologies from Sue Bourne for the meeting on the 19th March 2015
- Minutes agreed by School's Forum

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/ SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)

- Update: VA is meeting with MB tomorrow
- Action for KMD is ongoing

4. 2014/15 DSG PROVISIONAL OUTTURN & AGREEMENT ON BLOCK TRANSFERS DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT

Presented by SD

- As discussed in previous Schools Forum's there is a serious issue with cost of the High Needs Block
- This is a basic report around what was carried forward
- Final outturn for 56K under
- High Needs is 1.2 million overspent
- Early years block has suffered due to this
- Future prevention to avoid the same situation
- This news is expected and this has been discussed previously
- 2 main requests for additional funding
- A lot of schools are struggling with balancing budgets

Additional request for funding - St Michaels

- St Michaels is not present today therefore will not be discussed

Additional request for funding - St Martins

Presented by guests Margret Buller and Bridget Jones

- Funding issue has arisen due to the school acquiring 8 more children
- Need to spend 26k on a member of staff
- This will be a temporary problem
- Losing 19 students but gaining 27 (losing a smaller class but gaining an extra larger class)
- This increase will not be recognised until the next census comes in but not for September funding
- This is the unfunded growth

Recommendation: the smaller payments be put in one upfront payment (15k additional for 15-16)

Outcome: Agreed

5. SCHOOLS PROVISIONAL BALANCES 2014/15

Presented by SD

- Every year as part of end of year for maintained school outline of agreed school balance
- Up to Schools Forum to decide/challenge since 2 years ago
- Quite a few schools have balances over threshold
- Overall the balances have not changed but some have gone high and some have gone low
- 15/16 budget there are a few schools who are struggling to balance due to Pension Increases
- National insurance going up in 16-17 to be noted
- Previously Schools Forum have asked officers at school to come back with reasons behind the balances that are over
- More increases than decreases
- There is not a view to take back the funding

Recommendation: Ask officers to come back with the reasons behind the excess balances taking into account last years and excess balances greater than 10k

Outcome: Agreed

6. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK WORKING GROUP UPDATE (VERBAL)

(Chris Steven's absent)

- JC, CC and SB all sit in this group and are present today
- JC - there has been progress and looking at where money has been spent
- Consultation with colleagues in early years, primary and secondary
- Parents forum consulted as well
- Intention is rather than shaving off money here and there, this is an opportunity to look at how the money is spent
- Looking at where there can be a more effective provision
- Further meeting next week in which it is hoped to combine all information gathered
- JC is meeting with Romona from Parents Forum
- JC will then be meeting with primary colleagues on Monday
- By Wednesday next week it is hoped to be able collate all this information
- Viv asks if the SEN consultant report will be able to have been used in this process; JC advises that they have not sighted this to date; KMD advises that at this stage this is not being released
- The group will only come with recommendations and in turn will bring these to School's Forum
- Explain what resources were available in Reading at the moment
- How are these resources accessed, what support there is, how extra funding can be obtained
- The group had a report from Parents Forum, they felt there were savings that could be made in certain areas
- It was felt around the table that there was good work being done but other groups should be consulted.

Action:

VA and PD to go back to their respective SENCO's to see if they were consulted in this process as there is some questions whether they were or not.

7. 2014/15 EARLY YEARS: UPDATE FROM EYSFF GROUP MEETING

Presented by SD

- Information that has been previously discussed
- 2nd point 0.7million used for High cost block overspend
- 2 year olds discussed in paragraph
- 1st in creating additional 2 year placements between Spring and Autumn
- The other side is the recommendation went to the Early Years funding panel -when it comes to primary and secondary schools the business rates/rents are separate
- When it comes to early years the business rates/rent is not separated and they have to find it within their budget; this balance can be a struggle
- Fund Newbridge and Caversham Nursery, some block funding for 15-16
- Appendix 1 - typo error. Newbridge example given gone from 17k to 27k per
- Caversham rates are much higher then all other's at £24,206.00
- The letter on the back discussed in respect of rates/rent and 50% discount and what it is applicable for
- Hopefully look at the early years funding and how to pay for business rates; how much or if is paid
- PK (Chair) asks for the table at end of 2nd page of appendix to be explained; N1 is the first year of nursery, N2 is the 2nd year of nursery and R is reception
- What has helped nurseries has been the funding for the rising 3's

Recommendation: Will seek to fund the £50k identified for rents and rates

Outcome: Agreed

8. PROPOSED DATES/TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Next meeting to be held on the 9th July 2015 at 5.00pm
- All present happy to meet at same time on a Thursday

Action:

- RD to provide future dates for Schools Forum

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- No other business