

Warrington Schools Forum
Membership

Membership with differentiated voting rights ~ Total Membership of 26, of whom 22 are entitled to vote on funding formula issues									
Tenure ends 31 August 2020									
Sector Representation (22)	Appointed by the Council following election by:	Member	Dates and Attendance						
			26 June 2018	2 October 2018	4 December 2018	15 January 2019	5 March 2019	25 June 2019	8 October 2019
Maintained Nursery School Senior Staff (1)	Primary Headteachers Group	Jane Wilkie (JaneW)	P	P	P	P			
Special School Staff (1)	Special School Headteachers Group	Maureen Brettell (MBr) <i>from 2 Oct</i>	P	P	A	X			
Special School Governor (1)	Governors Forum	Mike Frost (MF) <i>(from 04/12/18)</i>	A	A	P	P			
PRU (1)	PRU Management Board	Sam Rigby-White (SRW)	A	A	P	A			
UTC (1)	UTC	Lee Barber (LB)	P	A	A	S			
Academy Secondary (5)	Academy Schools	Gwyn Williams (GW)	P	P	P	P			
		Tim Long (TL)	P	P	A	A			
		John Carlin (JC)	P	P	A	P			
		Bev Scott-Herron (BSH)	P	P	S	P			
	Governors Forum	Kieran Walshe (KW)	A	A	P	A			
Academy Primary (1)	Academy Schools	Andrew Redman (AR)	A	P	S	A			
Maintained Primary School Sector (8)	WAPH (4)	Cath Cooke <i>(from 15/01/19)</i>	P	P	A	P			
		Gary Cunningham (GC)	S	P	P	P			
		Lesley McGann (LM)	P	P	P	P			
		Lyndsey Glass (LG)	S	P	P	P			
	Governors Forum (4)	Stuart Munslow (SM)	P	A	P	P			
		David Hart (DH)	A	P	P	P			
		Janet Lazarus (JL)	P	P	A	P			
		Hazel Coen (HC)	P	A	P	P			
Maintained Secondary School Sector (2)	WASCL (2)	Chris Hunt (CH)	P	P	P	P			
		Ed McGlinchey (EM)	A	P	P	A			
Private Voluntary and Independent Providers (1)	PVI Providers Forum	Ginny Taylor (GT)	P	P	A	A			

Representing	Member	Dates and Attendance						
		26 June 2018	2 October 2018	4 December 2018	15 January 2019	5 March 2019	25 June 2019	8 October 2019
<u>Non-Schools Members (4)</u>								
Anglican Diocese (1)	Jacqui Wightman (JacquiW)	P	P	S	P			
Roman Catholic Diocese (1)	Tim Warren (TW)	P	A	A	P			
16-19 Institutions (1)	Julie McCann (JM)	P	P	P	P			
Parent Governor (1)	Vacant	-	-	-	-			

Independent Chair	Maureen Banner (MBa)	P	P	P	P			
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Representing		26 June 2018	2 October 2018	4 December 2018	15 January 2019	5 March 2019	25 June 2019	8 October 2019	3 December 2019
<u>Warrington Borough Council</u>									
Head of Service Education and SEND	Melissa Young (MY) <i>(from 2 Oct)</i>	P	P	P	P				
Finance Manager	James Campbell (JC)	P	P	P	P				
Senior Accountant (Schools)	Garry Bradbury (GB)	P	P	P	P				
Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services	Cllr Jean Carter (CllrJC)	P	A	A	A				

Key

P ~ Present

S ~ Substitute

A ~ Apologies

- ~ Vacancy

X ~ Absent with no apologies

O ~ Observer

Trades Union

Gary Moge

(NASUWT)

Presenting an Item:

Simon Bleckly

Audit Manager, WBC

Substitutes:

Amanda Downing

on behalf of Lee Barber, UTC

Apologies

Shaun Everett

(NUT & ATL)

Paula Worthington

Assistant Director, Early Help, Education and SEND, WBC

Minutes:

Gill Sykes

	<i>Item</i>	Action
1.	<p>Apologies and Welcome</p> <p>The chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting, introductions were made and apologies were noted.</p> <p>Recent changes to Schools Forum representatives are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Frost replaced Trish Chapman as Special Schools Forum rep (04/12/18) • Cath Cooke replaced Hazel Fryman as Maintained Primary School rep (15/01/19) 	
2.	<p>School audits</p> <p>Simon Bleckly (SB) presented his report to the forum on the main findings from the school audits carried out by Internal Audit in 2018. SB highlighted an error in the first table where the total figure for “Limited” should be 2. It was noted that there has been good performance, and no serious concerns with schools over the last three years. The recommendations noted key areas in a number of schools, but these were fairly isolated. There were no issues in relation to the schools financial value standard.</p> <p>Regional and national issues were noted, which include IR35, GDPR, ransomware and others (further details are available in the report). SB highlighted ransomware with a reminder for schools to check their backup procedures and make sure these are carried out.</p> <p>The audit testing programme is being planned for next year, and the team will prioritise schools that have not been audited for a couple of years. As part of this process, account will be taken of any plans for schools to become Academies.</p> <p>Noted that schools can face an increased risk of fraud from internal and external sources. National examples were given where staff were unchallenged and there was no oversight or control. Schools are targets for external fraudsters and were reminded to stay vigilant.</p> <p>The audit report for 2018 concluded that there is Satisfactory Assurance that Warrington schools have effective systems of governance and internal control in place.</p> <p>Comments/queries were invited by the Chair:</p> <p>JacquiW requested more information on GDPR and what schools have been fined for and the amount of the fines.</p> <p>Action: SB agreed to follow up and provide examples of fines.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum is asked to note and comment on the contents of the report. NOTED 	SB

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3.	<p>Minutes from the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and matters arising were addressed.</p> <p>Page 4: Additional capital funding (little extras): Garry Bradbury (GB) noted this additional money is likely to be calculated on a banded system with nursery and primary £32.10 per pupil, secondary £48.15 per pupil and special/PRU £96.30 per pupil. There will also be a £3,000 lump sum per setting. Uncertainties are around which census they will use for the calculation (online suggests October 2017), and if faith schools will receive through the Diocese or the local authority. Noted that the process will be the same spending guidelines as DFC – incur expense and claim back.</p>	
4.	<p>Funding update and notification of school budgets</p> <p>GB presented his report to the forum with a funding update and notification of school budgets for 2019/20. Full funding pack will be issued at the end of February.</p> <p>It was noted that an additional £125m has been added nationally to the High Needs Block allocation, with £469,344 of this for Warrington for the current and next financial years. The Local Authority will discuss with Schools Forum at the next meeting how this Block, and the additional contribution from Schools Block, will be allocated to the various areas of need.</p> <p>HC queried when the funding will be allocated directly from central government. GB noted that this was originally supposed to happen for 2020/2021, although this commitment has now been diluted; it's now being referred to by the DfE as an 'aspiration', with no firm deadline attached. If and when this does happen, budgets will be set with no local discretion around how much of Schools Block is transferred to other DSG blocks, and there would also be no sector-wide de-delegation process.</p> <p>JacquiW queried paragraph 3.2 of the report and the major concern around the degree to which protections underpin the allocations. GB noted it suggests that if protection was to be diluted or removed it will cause a problem in Warrington funding. Budgets themselves are protected as schools have this year's growth included. The overall minimum funding guarantee is greater because of the decisions made last year. This is a concern we wanted schools to be aware of.</p> <p>LG queried paragraph 2.3 of the report around the Early Years Block, and because of the low take up of 15 hours and the low take up of the 2y offer we may be in trouble with the Early Years Block. GB noted that if the reduction in hours are a trend then the funding will find its own level, and lagged funding brings its own risk. When the Early Years Block is recalculated (usually around June) the local authority will report the impact to Schools Forum.</p>	

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	<p>SM queried paragraph 2.4 of the report around the High Needs Block. The extra money is good news, and on behalf of the forum requested an overall picture of the High Needs money and the projected deficits. GB noted that the projected deficit won't be as high as previously discussed, and is likely to be £1.4m to £1.5m for this financial year.</p> <p>LG queried why Schools Forum have not received a recent report on SEND spending looking at costs and savings. The Chair noted that Paula Worthington is due to attend the next meeting and a report will be provided. MY noted that today's meeting was an additional meeting specifically for decisions around the finance agenda items. There is a need to mitigate against the cost of the deficit and we are looking at every element of SEND with the focus on any improvement feeding into the report, for example, the local authority are reviewing every single out-of-area contract. Further discussion took place around SEND, EHCPs and the approaches being taken to mitigate the projected deficit. Further work is to follow on High Needs and this will be a main agenda item at the March Schools Forum meeting.</p> <p>The Chair informed the forum that she has approached the new leader of the council (Cllr Russ Bowden) to highlight the pressures schools are under, and asked the forum if they wanted her to invite him to the next forum meeting. Forum were in agreement, and the Chair noted she will pass on the invitation for him to attend.</p> <p>Action: Maureen Banner to invite Cllr Russ Bowden to the next Schools Forum meeting.</p> <p>It is recommended that Schools Forum members representing mainstream schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the contents of the report; NOTED (ii) Communicate the budget figures to their representative sectors NOTED 	MB
5.	<p>Agreements on de-delegations</p> <p>GB presented his report to the forum on 2019/20 de-delegations, and noted that schools have already committed to continued de-delegation for the lifetime of the new system contract with Capita (expiring in 2020). Union facilities agreement was discussed separately, and ratified, at the meeting of 2 October 2018, so no decision is required for this.</p> <p>De-delegated items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency budgets (for Pupil Number Increases and Additional Classes): GB noted that there is a substantial underspend of £345k across the two contingencies. This can either be returned to the schools who contributed in the first place using the same method, or carried forward into the new year, and potentially don't need to de-delegate again. (At the beginning of the year there was £570k in the pot.) AGREED at primary sector to carry forward the current year 2018/19 underspend as a contingency. • Miscellaneous Licences AGREED to de-delegate at primary and secondary • CLEAPS AGREED to de-delegate at primary and secondary 	

	<i>Item</i>	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free School Meals Assessment AGREED to de-delegate at primary and secondary • Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Costs AGREED to de-delegate at primary and secondary <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>(i) It is recommended that representatives from the maintained sectors are asked, for each phase, to decide which funding streams are to be de-delegated for 2019/20. See decisions noted above.</p> <p>(ii) For services not agreed for de-delegation, but for which it is recognised that a demand still exists (either collectively or individually), that Schools Forum suggests an alternative model of remuneration, service delivery, or both. NOTED</p>	
6.	AOB – no items to discuss	
7.	<p>Meeting schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 5 March 2019 at 5.15 pm • Tuesday 25 June 2019 at 5.15 pm • Tuesday 8 October 2019 at 5.15 pm • Tuesday 3 December 2019 at 5.15 pm <p><i>(Venue – Sir Thomas Boteler CE High School)</i></p>	

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed.