

MINUTES

Title of Meeting:	School's Forum High Needs Working Group	
Purpose or Mandate:	To oversee the HNB of the DSG	
Date:	Tuesday 16 th June 2020	
Place:	Teams Meeting	
Times:	2.00-3.30 pm	
Attendees:	<p>Gemma Morgan (Chair)</p> <p>Michael Quinton</p> <p>Allison Coleman</p> <p>Lawrence Chapman</p> <p>Graham Alcock</p> <p>Calvin Marshall</p> <p>Sally Garrett</p> <p>Lisa Jones</p> <p>Sophie Harbut</p> <p>Steve Newman</p> <p>Joy Settle</p> <p>Gemma Andrews</p> <p>Helen Murray</p>	<p>Head of SEND Funding and Provider Services, SCC</p> <p>Schools Funding Policy Manager SCC</p> <p>Governor, Federation of Fairfield and Colneis Schools</p> <p>CEO SENDAT</p> <p>Headteacher, Chalk Hill PRU</p> <p>Director of Inclusive Learning, West Suffolk College</p> <p>Headteacher, Ashley School</p> <p>Consortium Multi-Academy Trust</p> <p>Apprentice Business Support Officer, SCC</p> <p>SEND Policy and Funding Manager, SCC</p> <p>High Needs Funding Moderation Lead, SCC</p> <p>Headteacher, Castle Hill</p> <p>Wickham Market Primary School</p>

PART A – contains items that could be disclosed in full to the public and staff

Item No	Item Description	Lead Officer
1.	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Apologies: Ashlee Jacobs, Jan Hatchell, Neil Winn, Allison Bowman, Sarah Wood, Jamie Mills, Judith Mobbs.</p>	GM
2.	<p><u>Actions from the last meeting:</u></p> <p>Last PRU heads meeting Gemma and Joy were due to attend, GM was unsure if this was missed in lockdown. GA confirmed there was an informal session, the next one is scheduled for July and Graham will extend invite to Joy and Gemma. GA also highlighted that the agenda needs updating to Chalk Hill from Hampden House.</p> <p>DSG recovery plan MQ and GM to discuss the recovery plan and discuss options for this. High Needs Block is accountable for the majority of the deficit on the DSG spend. This group will be of great value to discuss plans to address this. Allison mentioned at School's</p>	

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	<p>Forum it would be useful to suggest that this group is working on the recovery plan.</p> <p>Final action point around Band I and reviewing a mechanism to address this. This had been delayed as other Banding work is needed around other School's migrating to the system. Revisit this at our next meeting.</p> <p>Actions: GA to extend invite to July PRU heads meeting to GM and JS. Band I Review Mechanism to be looked at by JS and GM</p>	
3	<p><u>Update on Dual Placement Policy:</u></p> <p>At the previous meeting SN detailed the discussions and proposals to adapt and develop the Policy Document. SN mentioned that Early Years have offered a minor amendment to capture their needs. SPCN were looking to provide some wording to make the document more Parent Carer friendly. SN will request an update for this.</p> <p>Previously we spoke about using Sharepoint to make further adjustments to the document, but it was asked if we could simply send out the current version to the group for their suggestions.</p> <p>SN explained that Suffolk's Policy Panel has been approached and steps were underway to present this to ensure compliance. Allison asked whether the Equality Impact Assessment had been undertaken. SN is to attend training with Jo on the 24th June and this will also be followed up.</p> <p>Any questions around this or the policy around how we might share this.</p> <p>Agree to mail this out along with the flow chart and gather suggestions for amendments.</p> <p>Actions: Make adjustments offered by the Early Years' Service, SPCN. GM and SN to meet with Family Services to capture their requirements to update the draft policy and flow chart. At this point share this with the High Needs Working Group for contributions.</p>	SN & GM
4.	<p><u>High Needs Funding – Summer Moderation Plans:</u></p> <p>Joy explained that we were unsure how we would cope with Moderation with the current lockdown restrictions. We needed to wait and see what the submissions were like in terms of numbers to see what would be needed. JS advised that the numbers for moderation in FE and Special schools were low. We did wonder if we could use the moderators in the normal way but with the challenges of lockdown and people working remotely, we were unable to. The issue was with the sensitive data being shared, ordinarily moderators can access SCC machines to review the information but this hasn't been viable this term without access to SCC laptops. As a result, Joy has been tackling the moderation and is relieved that the numbers are quiet, currently we have had 116 cases needing moderation. The intention is once the moderation is complete, we can get the monies</p>	JS

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	<p>out to mainstream settings in July. We have also shared this communication via Suffolk Headlines. SN and Izzy will support a secondary level of moderation if required.</p> <p>From a mainstream point of view there was a situation where student needs had changed quite quickly, the new system went through smoothly and support was made available. GM thanked HM for the positive feedback and was very grateful for this.</p> <p>Letters went out on headlines if colleagues are in a position working from home without access to admin Joy has been able to share templates and updates. Joy did highlight a recent issue on headlines. Ordinarily we are clear that the message is for all settings rather than schools. But the most recent version didn't make this clear as there are so many being shared in the current climate. It was a little out of our control this time, but we have addressed this and will ensure this does not happen again. We will wait and see what the Autumn term will be like hope that we can reinstate the moderation panel.</p> <p>Somebody did ask what the % of learners with a Band have an EHC Plan. This is a piece of work that Joy will be undertaking over the Summer Holidays and will also look at school's comparing the numbers and analysis.</p>	
	<p><u>Schools Forum Meeting</u></p> <p>GM gave an overview of the paper being taken to Schools Forum this week. Ideally Gemma would have liked to share this with the group but sadly the time frames didn't allow this. The paper asked for the High Needs Funding Current position and a summary of demand. We are now predicting an overspend of £2.9 million, despite having extra money this year. The paper demonstrates that the costs are going up largely around demand whereas the cost per place is largely stabilising. LC noticed that Special Schools costs have gone down whereas other settings have increased. Independent schools have a significant increased spend. Gemma was able to confirm the previously poorly funded SSC's now have a more appropriate level of funding.</p> <p>Independent schools are the biggest area of spend in terms of cost per place. Until we can accommodate more children within the Local Offer then we have an ongoing battle in terms rising costs. Ultimately the demand is huge.</p> <p>The paper aimed to outline - Where we are, why we are growing our places and why we are spending more.</p> <p>LC flagged up the cost difference between Independent and Special placements. LC feels that they might be able to accommodate children if there was funding above the £16k which is the standard rate but comfortably below the average costs of the Independent places.</p>	GM

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	<p>As a Subgroup of School's Forum, this group is set up to apply appropriate funding per place per child but also consider how we might review this to work within the limited pot of funding available. Although there is a recognition that Suffolk is funded less than it's statistical neighbours we can't continue to overspend. Allison has a concern that we have raised this issue before, and we seem no closer to what the answers might be. This group is ready and waiting to have those discussions around how we will be addressing the overspend. Keen not to appear that we are shying away from this challenge.</p> <p>Sally raised two points that link Special School academies. Sally felt that this didn't capture the PRU place costs. Special Schools are taking more places, but the costs are fixed, and Special Schools seem to be doing more for less. GM explained that there is a new Special School opening and this accounts for some of those numbers and we are opening further settings to meet this need. Special Schools average costs is around £16,500. Sally mentioned that the funding position for Special Schools has been the case for the past 7 years and reference conversations with other authorities. It is interesting to see the discussions with other authorities and their funding packages. Sally feels that we are moving towards fair funding across Suffolk but there is a view that PRU's still sit outside this as the Bands seem higher. GA revisited the moderation process and the decision on the sum for PRU children. As AP and what they offer across the whole age range, the needs are different at different ages and stages that the funding should be the same all the way across. Sally felt that in this aspect the model didn't look at the needs of the child and instead this was led by the provision. Graham explained that the band descriptors still worked. Sally referenced a transition for a KS1 child moving from a PRU to a Special School. Transition from one setting to another is something that may need to be considered. Joy has done some notional banding for cases, but this is part of a piece of bigger work where all pupils have an individual band.</p> <p>Lawrence wanted to raise point 29 on page 8, children moving back into the Local Offer. Although Covid would have an impact Lawrence felt that this can't explain this fully. SCC needed to develop it's Post 16 Offer. There is a SEND FE committee that LC works on with Clive Mobbs. If we have more data, we might be able to do some further work on this. Calvin reiterated that he is unsure who these children are. All FE colleges willing to look into the needs of these children.. There is work that needs to be undertaken with those cases that are currently within independent settings and then this can be shared. Conversations are needed with families as well. The Independent provision is much more expensive, but we need to ensure that young people have a good local offer to access. Calvin happy to develop an offer in Suffolk but there was a feeling there was less desire to bring students back. Calvin was doing some work that was headed up by Judith. Nathan started this work, but communications have gone quiet since. This work may have now moved to Paula Fuge. Gemma</p>	

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	<p>will make some enquiries with the team as we may need to start again as opposed to pick up the previous thread. FE can support this work particularly in encouraging parents. It was agreed that there is a discussion to be had outside of the meeting.</p> <p>GM highlighted that previously these meetings didn't line up with the School's Forum meetings. GM feels they are better aligned now. Allowing time for papers to be reviewed and amended. School's Forum Papers also need to go through CYP DMT. Gemma can share a draft if this sits better with the timings.</p> <p>Actions: Discussion around FE to be had outside of the group with CM and GM. GM to share future papers with the group.</p>	
	<p><u>A.O.B</u></p> <p>No other business from anyone around the table.</p>	
	<p>High Needs Working Group Future Meeting Dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10th Sept 2020 – Endeavour House ▪ 5th Nov 2020 - G01 Landmark House <p>Venues to be confirmed pending lockdown arrangements.</p>	<p>Schools Forum Dates:</p> <p>Thurs 8th Oct 2020</p> <p>Thurs 26th Nov 2020</p>