



HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM
MINUTES
Friday 6 February 2026 at 1pm
Online – Via Teams

Item	
1	Welcome, apologies & opening comments. BS welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked members for making themselves available at short notice. Apologies were received and accepted from Nicola Edwards and Laurie Cornwall.
2	Minutes & actions from previous meeting 15.01.2026 - Minutes confirmed as true/accurate record of SF meeting 15.01.26. The final paragraph at section 4.9 in the revised scheme of financing, (relating to SRMA) has been left in in error and needs to be removed. - Actions from the previous meeting will be carried over to the Schools Forum meeting 25.02.26 - Forum membership to be reviewed though reminder to academy members that there are still four vacancies for academy representative. - Confirmed that the Early Years consultation is underway. SENIF figures have been shared with Early Years sub-group. Action: Amendment to paragraph in Scheme of Financing to be amended – LH/PH to review Action: Academy members were asked to promote SF to colleagues as there are still four vacancies for academy representatives. Action: Actions from the previous meeting will be carried over to be reviewed at the next Schools Forum meeting 25.03.26 Q) Has the LA received a response from the DfE in regard to the application for the request of 1% school from the schools block transfer? A) Yes a response has been received and the DfE have rejected the LA's request for 1% and have agreed to 0.5% from the schools block transfer. AP noted this is a very disappointing for the LA and we will have to discuss with schools the impact of this. Likely that the non-statutory funding (ESF, threshold funding and SENDEX will be paused for 26/27).
3	Membership Update & Vice-Chair Nominations BS confirmed that Becky Broadhurst has nominated herself as Vice-Chair. As BB is the only candidate it was agreed that she was appointed to the role. Schools Forum thanked Becky for stepping up into this role and supporting Schools Forum.
4a.	Support for Schools in Financial Difficulty - AP outlined the reason for requesting this extra-ordinary meeting. Having further reviewed the significant fall in pupil numbers, with the projection that this will continue, and the impact this will have on school funding, it was felt that there needed to be an opportunity for Forum members to consider whether to de-delegate for a central fund to support schools in financial difficulty. There is also a need for a more strategic approach to how we support schools and more of a partnership across the borough. Historically, proposals for a similar fund have been rejected. - If redundancies are required, there are rare circumstances where the LA could be responsible for supporting the schools with some of these costs.

	• The DfE advice was that schools should be planning strategically in advance, for example, with three-year budget plans and correlating this to expected pupil numbers and staffing numbers. • Currently 18% vacancy rates in Hillingdon schools, suggests that not all schools have submitted PAN reductions where needed. The LA is going to have a clear policy on redundancies, ensuring schools start the dialogue with the LA at the earliest opportunity. • LA will work with schools to strategically plan and avoid redundancies and the associated costs. Currently no schools have approached the LA to discuss any significant restructure they intend to do in the next three years which will cause redundancies. • In autumn 2024, Schools Forum did consider but rejected the idea of having a general central fund to support maintained schools. • This fund would only go towards supporting schools with redundancy costs and would not be absorbed into any deficit. Schools Forum are being asked whether they wish to de-delegate into a central fund to support schools that may need it. • If Schools Forum vote to agree to this central fund being set up the finer details of how it will be distributed will then be looked at but it is expected that this would involve a panel with school representatives to have oversight and make decisions. • PH noted that despite planning, some schools have found themselves with significant fall in roll in a very short time due to external factors, completely beyond their control. AP appreciated this was a specific set of circumstances and will discuss separately. • Confirmed that, if agreed, this central fund would be available from 1st April 2026 and would be for all mainstream, maintained schools, (not include special schools). • TE was disappointed that such short notice was given to this meeting, though not in disagreement in principle with the idea of a central fund but there are several issues of trying to introduce this at such a late stage. Ideally this should have been done 10 years ago when funding was available. Concerned that there has been no formal consultation with schools and risk the LA could face a potential legal challenge. If agreed, would recommend that it was delayed by a year to be implemented. • Concern raised that maintained schools are being asked to contribute this to and many of them are already in financial difficulties. • AP clarified that this fund would only be for those schools that wouldn't get approval through the LA. • BS noted that some schools will have already been informed by the forecasts and made the decision to restructure, resulting in redundancies and have absorbed these costs themselves. They may feel they are now contributing to a fund to support others who have not been so proactive. • NK queried the financial oversight from the LA for maintained schools. As an Academy, accounts are signed off annually, to prove the school is a going concern and must reflect the reserves as a percentage of the GAG and other income. • The LA does review the 3-yr forecasts but the way the school has calculated projections can vary. Pamela Hawtree has now joined the team and will be scrutinising the budget plans going forward. They will be reviewed with and informed by the SOP (School Organisational Plan). • Intention is that schools are planning strategically and therefore will be able to manage staffing, through natural turnover where necessary without redundancies. • GC questioned if the amount of money suggested would be enough? Has financial modelling has been carried out and considered other alternatives like salary protection? AP clarified that the Finance team would work with the Schools HR in regard to modelling at this time if SF agreed with the proposal, then a framework would be built in collaboration with schools as to how this would operate. • BB questioned about amalgamations and whether the LA picks up the costs of these and it wouldn't come from the new central fund. AP clarified that amalgamated schools are protected for the first year with their full funding (dependent on when the amalgamation takes place) and receive 70% in the second year which enables schools to have enough time to plan and manage staffing, though LA would provide further support if needed. Also, in most cases, amalgamation takes place when there is a vacancy for a Headteacher of one of the pairs of schools which accounts for the eventual loss of lump sum, therefore any changes to staffing wider than that could be done gradually without the need for
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	redundancies in most cases. Therefore, we would not expect this fund to support for amalgamations. • BB noted that other headteachers have done some redundancies and paid for them themselves as well as creating a 10yr forecast to manage budgets. Felt that the creation of this fund feels like those who've been proactive are being punished to support those who haven't done this work. • BB also highlighted that the outcome of the de-delegation request will significantly impact the really highly inclusive schools who benefit from the additional funding and that will make things very difficult for future forecasting. If SF can't support de-delegation for supporting inclusive schools, then don't feel we're in a position to support the creation of this fund. • Questioned the interest that is charged on cash advances from the LA and also whether the redistribution of funds from schools with healthy surpluses is an option? AP clarified that there is no mechanism for re-distribution of funds in schools individual bank accounts. Schools with deficits are given cash advances, but these are paid back with an interest charge. • AP reiterated that as an LA we need to look at ways that schools can support each other and work together and some future strategic conversations regarding this are to be had. • Place Planning are working with schools and encouraging PAN reductions in order to manage numbers and allow a more efficient use of resources. Proposal: Schools Forum members from mainstream maintained schools were invited to vote on whether to approve the suggestion to create a separate fund which they would all contribute, to provide support for schools in financial difficulty. Decision: Schools Forum unanimously agreed NOT to support the creation of this fund to provide support for schools in financial difficulty. Action: Strategic planning will be added to a future Schools Forum meeting agenda to be discussed at the start of the academic year.
5	AOB – Confirmed the date of next Schools Forum has been changed by one day to Wednesday 25th March. This will still be held in person and hosted by Ruislip Gardens Primary. Action: HB will circulate and amended calendar invite

Schools Forum Agreed Actions 15.01.26.

Item	Action	Responsibility
3	Any member interested in becoming Vice-Chair to submit an expression of interest to BS/AP via the Schools Forum email.	All SF Members
3	Academy members were asked to promote SF to colleagues to fill the 4 vacancies.	Academy Members
3	Members were asked to discuss 14-19 partnership vacancy with colleagues.	All SF Members
4a	GB to provide a detailed breakdown of the outcomes for the children and impact The Skills Hub has with assurances on how the money is being spent.	GB
4b	LH to contact the NEU rep and ask for further level of information regarding the work that has been carried out. This information will be shared, and a decision can be made at the next meeting.	LH
6b	PR to send out the consultation for early years funding, to be concluded by 28 th February.	PR
7	Pamela Hawtree is to lead a working party of individuals from the maintained sector to go through this document and update it. LH requested anyone interested in joining the group to contact her	Maintained sector members

Voting Members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ROLE	Attendance	TERM ENDS
Maintained Nursery (1)				
Shabana Aslam	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2026
Maintained Primary (6)				
Becky Broadhurst	Hayes Park School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029
Vicky Jarvis	Field End Infant School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029
Carly Rissen	Colham Manor	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2028
John Buckingham	Glebe School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Tony Eginton	Minet Infant & Nursery Schools and Hillside Junior School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Maintained Secondary (1)				
Cathy Mosdell	Harlington School		Attended	Sep 2029
Maintained Special (1)				
Pearl Greenwald	Hedgewood School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2027
Academy Primary (4)				
Harshindar Buttar	The Park Federation	Principal of Lake Farm Park Academy	Attended	Sep 2027
Nicola Edwards	William Byrd School	Headteacher	Apologies	Sep 2028
Nicola Kelly	Charville Academy	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029
Roseline Wilkinson	Charville Academy	Governor	Attended	Sep 2029
Academy Secondary (8)				
John Garner	Ruislip High School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2026
Roger Leighton	Partnership Learning Trust	CEO	Attended	Sep 2029
Liam McGillicuddy	Bishopshalt School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2027
Ben Spinks (CHAIR)	Middlesex Learning Partnership	CEO	Attended	Sep 2028
Vacancy x 4				
Special Academies (1)				
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	COO	Attended	Sep 2026
Alternative Provision (1)				
Laurie Cornwall	The Skills Hub	Deputy CEO	Apologies	Sep 2027
Private, Voluntary & Independent Early Years Providers (2)				
Elaine Caffary	4 Street Nursery	Nursery Manager	Attended	Sep 2028
Naazish Haq	Little Companions	Manager/Owner	Attended	Sep 2027
14-19 Partnership (1)				
Vacancy				
Diocesan Representative (1)				
Nicola Dallibar St Andrews C of E Primary	St Andrews CofE Primary School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029

Other attendees (non-voting)

NAME	REPRESENTING	ROLE
Helen Brown	Warrender Primary School	Headteacher
Nicky Bulpett	Ruislip Gardens	Headteacher
Louise Crook	Coteford Infant School	Headteacher
Graham Cunningham	Meadow High	Headteacher
Danny Gallup	BWI	Governor
Jo Palmer	Minet Junior School	Governor

Bryony Smith	Hedgewood School	Co-Headteacher
Officers		
Gary Binstead	LA Head of Education & SEND Commissioning	
Helen Boundy	LA (Clerk)	
Luisa Hansen	LA Head of Children's Finance	
Pamela Hawtree	Lead Finance Business Partner	
Kamaljit Kaur	Lead Finance Business Partner	
Steve Muldoon	Corporate Director of Finance	
Cllr Susan O'Brien	Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education	
Abi Preston	LA Director of Education & SEND	
Philip Ryan	LA Portage and Families' Information Service - Service Manager	
Caroline Ryder	LA – Education Improvement Advisor - SEND	
Lisa Swales	LA – Service Manager Childcare	
Richard Woodfin	LA - School Improvement Advisor – Primary & SEND	