



HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM MINUTES **Tuesday 9th September 2025 at 1pm via TEAMS**

Voting Members

NAME	ORGANISATION	Role	Attendance	TERM ENDS
Maintained Nursery (1)				
Shabana Aslam	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2026
Maintained Primary (8)				
Vacancy				
Vacancy				
Kris O'Sullivan	Deanesfield Primary	Headteacher	Absent	Sep 2028
Carly Rissen	Colham Manor	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2028
John Buckingham	Glebe School	Governor	Apologies	Sep 2028
Jo Palmer	Hillside Infant & Junior Schools and Minet Junior School	Governor	Present	Sep 2028
Tony Eginton	Minet Infant & Nursery Schools and Hillside Junior School	Governor	Present	Sep 2028
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	Governor	Present	Sep 2028
Maintained Secondary (1)				
Dan Cowling (VICE CHAIR)	Oak Wood School	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2026
Maintained Special (1)				
Pearl Greenwald	Hedgewood School	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2027
Academies (9)				
Harshindar Buttar	The Park Federation	Principal of Lake Farm Park Academy	Present	Sep 2027
John Garner	Ruislip High School	Governor	Present	Sep 2026
Nicola Edwards	William Byrd School	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2028
Liam McGillicuddy	Bishopshalt School	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2027
Ben Spinks (CHAIR)	Middlesex Learning Partnership	CEO	Present	Sep 2028
Nicola Kelly	Charville Academy	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2029
Roseline Wilkinson	Charville Academy	Governor	Present	Sep 2029
Roger Leighton	Partnership Learning Trust	CEO	Present	Sep 2029
(vacancy)				
Special Academies (1)				
Sudhi Pathak	Eden Academy Trust	COO	Present	Sep 2026
Alternative Provision (1)				
Laurie Cornwall	The Skills Hub	Deputy CEO	Present	Sep 2027
Private, Voluntary & Independent Early Years Providers (2)				
Elaine Caffary	4 Street Nursery	Nursery Manager	Present	Sep 2028
Naazish Haq	Little Companions	Manager/Owner	Present	Sep 2027
14-19 Partnership (1)				
Jonathan Jacob	Global Academy	Assistant Principal	Apologies	Sep 2028
Diocesan Representative (1)				
Nicola Dallibar	St Andrews C of E Primary	Headteacher	Present	

Other attendees (non-voting)

NAME	REPRESENTING	ROLE	Attendance	TERM EXPIRES
Independent Non-Maintained Special School				
Debbie Gilder	Pield Heath School	Governor		
Nicky Bulpett	Ruislip Gardens	Headteacher		Sep 2028
Louise Crook	Coteford Infant School	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2028
Maintained Special				
Graham Cunningham	Meadow High	Headteacher	Present	Sep 2027
London Borough of Hillingdon				
Ndenko Asong	LA Strategic Finance Consultant		Present	
Gary Binstead	LA Head of Education & SEND Commissioning		Present	
Helen Boundy	LA (Clerk)		Present	
Luisa Hansen	LA Head of Children's Finance		Present	
Dominika Michalik	LA Assistant Director of SEND & Inclusion		Present	
Michael Hawkins	LA Head of Education & Lifelong Learning		Present	
Abi Preston	LA Director of Education & SEND		Present	
Philip Ryan	LA Portage and Families' Information Service - Service Manager		Present	
Cllr Susan O'Brien	Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education		Present	

Item	
1.	Welcome, apologies & opening comments • BS welcomed everyone to the meeting. • Apologies were sent from JJ and JB.
2.	Minutes from previous meeting 08.07.2025 • Most actions on agenda from previous meeting have been completed – outlined on table at end of agenda. • Training –survey has been sent out and the group can agree at next meeting in regarding to what training is required this year – particularly for new members. • Query regarding school balances, clarified at last meeting and papers available. NA confirmed that the deficit on central block fully discussed at last meeting and all papers were shared. • Minutes of last SF meeting held on 08.07.25 were AGREED as a true and accurate account.
a)	Review Constitution & Membership Review • Reviewed draft constitution following discussion at the previous meeting. The revised version has been tweaked to try and strike the correct balance between enabling new members to join without losing the skills and experience of existing members. Constitution has not been updated since 2012. • AP highlighted that more information has been set out regarding process of elections, and clarification regarding being in post for two terms point. Outlined who the regular LA attendees will be. • AP queried the role of the Shadow and whether this category is removed as anyone is welcome to attend these meetings. Requested clarification on role of substitutes. • TE outlined his concerns about the proposed changes had been made, citing DfE guidance on alternative ways in which members could be retained until their term of office has expired. AP confirmed she has reviewed the guidance in great detail and felt that the proposal was on balance the most effective. Ensuring ratios are maintained and the size of Schools Forum remains manageable. • TE expressed concern about imposing minimum of 50% HT in the maintained primary sector representatives and suggested having a minimum of 1/3 heads and 1/3 governors. Also raised issue of limiting two-term tenure. AP outlined that currently it is predominately governors which is not ideal and is out of line with other schools' forums. Governors will always have a representation in this group. The revised wording of the draft constitution suggests that the norm would be a max of two terms, but that members could serve longer if no other representatives come forward for election. New Finance Director will be invited to future meetings, though no obligation for him to attend invitations extended to Cllr O'Brien (who was able to join this SF meeting) • JP outlined her concern about equality of governors and that the changes could reduce the representation and input from governors. AP clarified that it is key that more school leaders are to be involved in SF whether through being a member or observer. • Clear that Academy members are under-represented in the current membership. Clarified that there is no stipulation as to number of different Academies represented. • Constitution to be reviewed on an annual basis. We can try the new format for the year and then review, can amend if it's not working. Objective is to get more school leaders involved. • AP suggested trialling new constitution for a year. It will be reviewed on an annual basis it can be changed next year if it is felt not to be working. • AP outlined Primary maintained – 4 governors / 2HT only area where out of balance. Easiest the 4 governors decide who to continue and recruit additional HT. No immediate change around terms of office. • Discussion was had around paragraph 18 of the DfE guidance and the different ways it can read. • BS noted it is essential that this issue is resolved, and forum reaches a position it can live with, this issue is not to dominate the meetings as there are significant financial decisions to be discussed and taken. • RL noted that governor representation widely varies between schools' forums. Also requested that the role that schools forum members have is outlined on membership list. • Agreed that the issue of representation in Primary Maintained sector is to be further discussed at Primary Heads' Forum on 19/9/25 – whether to agree a 50% split or minimum 1/3 split between HT/Governors. Proposal: Schools Forum asked to vote on main body of the revised constitution with the changes to primary maintained sector to be confirmed at the next meeting 7.10.25.

	Outcome: Schools forum members voted on the proposal and unanimously approved the updated constitution (subject to small tweaks and maintained primary sector position) Action: Ensure wording is consistent throughout the document just use one word (category/type) and clarify removal of member if misses 3 consecutive meetings. Where a ballot takes place confirm this will be confidential. Actions: Finance Director (151 Officer) and Cllr O'Brien will always be on the distribution list for meetings. Action: Role of Shadow/Substitute members to be clarified. Action: TE to send email to AP/BS with specific points he has raised Action: Agreed that the issue of representation in Primary Maintained sector is to be further discussed at Primary Forum on 19/9/25 – whether to agree a 50% or minimum 1/3 split between HT/Governors. Action: Revised constitution to be re-circulated to members with amendments once primary heads forum has made a decision regarding primary maintained sector.
b)	School Block Transfer (Consultation to run to 26th September 2025) Intention at today's meeting is that the principals of the consultation are to be outlined and to inform members, not for a decision to be taken. <u>This is for both Academies and Maintained Schools</u> Action: A survey is to be sent to all school headteachers tomorrow 10.09.25 schools will have until 26th September to respond. Schools Forum members will be asked to vote on the proposal of 1% School block transfer at the next Forum meeting, informed by the survey outcomes. Question will be whether schools support the 1% transfer. If this is not supported and not overturned by DfE the LA would have no option but to stop the non-statutory funding. • AP outlined the principles of transfer asking for 1%. Schools Forum must always vote on SBT. • Improvement journey and safety valve targets. Various documents shared outlining all the collaborative work that takes place to streamline all our funding streams. • £65m deficit with HN, statutory override in place until March 2028, once removed that deficit goes on the council books and move us to a section 114 territory (as will many others). • Previously £28m in year deficit, now 24/25 now £14m deficit. Working closely with special schools to reduce numbers of independent placements. Banded savings, savings around dynamic purchasing system but still have an in-year deficit. • Currently deliver significant amount of non-statutory support for our schools but we don't have money in our budget £4m spend in non-statutory funding SENDEX, early support funding, notional threshold high numbers of EHCP, support with first £6K those that are highly inclusive. SAS service. Believe they have an impact and stop needs escalating in many cases. We can't afford these services without the SBT, cannot continue to overspend. • AP clarified SF role in the decision making. Anything over 0.5% has to be referred to the secretary of state for approval. DfE are very clear that SF has to vote and give their voice either way which they do take into consideration. SF support makes a difference but there's not a direct correlation with disapplication outcomes. • Formal vote in October – each non statutory service is clearly outlined for everyone – what's been supported informs decision making. • Supporting Consultation Papers will further outline what each of these services that the SBT will fund. Aware that there is discrepancy across the borough with schools that benefit more than others from these additional services. • Estimated that the 1% will be £3.5m. • DC noted felt that the non-statutory areas, is more of a redistribution of wealth. A model could be proposed that schools can buy into those services. Current model enables some schools to benefit while others don't. Also is there information on impact? Also raised issue of schools about supporting schools with historical deficits. • Buy in could only apply to SAS service, funding frameworks can't do anything to change those. Meeting young people's needs in LBH regardless of what school, some schools are magnet for SEND and they are disproportionately impacted and the funding from the SBT supports those. • CR queried if we don't spend SBT what happens to the money – we will spend the money won't be underspent as the transfer does not cover the full amount– always have a caveat of what would happen if money was underspent. Action: NA to ensure that each table refers to a financial year or academic year.

	Action: NA to amend table in section 5 – 25/26, to include an indicative prediction. Section 6 to be reworded to highlight the indicative impact pupil numbers will have on secondary schools – not just primary. - LM noted Correlation/causation services provided that schools may or may not use. Case studies/data for children to show the impact of the provision that this money has had. Separate out services that could be traded and those that couldn't. If it's a good service people will buy into it. Look at what other London boroughs are doing. - AP could look to trade SAS, but this would result in all schools having no support around SEND unless it is paid for. Requested HASH/Primary Forum to have a general discussion in regard to a traded service. Action DC/NK to raise issue of traded SAS service at HASH and Primary Forum. Action: AP to provide an update at October SF meeting in regard to ESF and its impact as well as SENDEX. - NA clarified that 1% would be taken from the overall school's block allocation and the remainder is then distributed to schools with the minimum funding guarantee taken into account. Some schools would be more impacted than others. Action: NA to provide an analysis that shows the overall impact of what the SBT would be to individual school budgets. Action: NA to provide an update to figures modelled based on last year's figures of what the funding will bring in and what the cost of providing the services.
c)	Education Statutory Duties De-delegation - <u>This is for Maintained Schools only</u> Action: A survey to be sent to maintained school headteachers tomorrow, they will have until 26th September to respond. SF members will be asked to vote in October meeting on the proposal requesting Education Statutory Duties De-delegation. - This funds the statutory duties that the Council has to support maintained schools. Originally funded by the ESG grant which the government changed, so we have to top slice from maintained school budgets. - Hillingdon is a very high delegating authority, we don't charge for many services and schools are free to pick where they get their services from. Only statutory duties are charged for though there are a range of other things that are given which aren't charged. Paper prepared for members clearly outlines this and can see that the contribution being asked for is low compared to other LAs as the general fund covers most of the costs. - Benchmarking exercise with other LAs has taken place to show as a comparison. - Supporting paper outlines a description of services to all schools versus maintained schools. Ensure it's clear to see the difference between what we have to do for all schools. - Outlined recent project in regard to free school meal auto-enrolment which has found a significant amount of funding for schools and will continue to provide this service, which we are not charging for though other LAs do. £12 per pupil as a contribution to cover statutory costs, this is a slight increase on the charge of £11 per pupil last year. - ND noted as a VA school, some of the maintained duties don't apply. SF approved the consultation of Education Statutory Duties De-delegation
	Top Up Payment changes – - NA provided an unreserved apology on behalf of the LA due to the communication regarding the banding review. It had not been as good as it should have been. We believed that schools had been duly informed about this, but clearly not the case and many schools were not aware of the changes and impact it would have. Sincere apologies as schools should have been forewarned whilst the banding review was taking place. We will ensure better communication going forward. - Payment of top ups switched over 52 weeks to 39 weeks to be in line with the school calendar. As budgets are created on a financial year basis from a school perspective this would appear as 7/12s in the current year and 5/12ths still to come from an academic year perspective. - Due to this being introduced at the end of the summer term, August is a full holiday period and there were no payments. This clearly caused concern especially in Special Schools. Reports that users were seeing on the provider portal were unusual and this was followed by some unusual transactions as the system was trying to recalculate it. - For months where there is a school holiday there will be a dip in amount received. Action: NA offered all schools the opportunity to work on an individual basis to resolve any issues and clarify the situation.

	- Special Schools has specific questions for finance regarding this change and requested a separate meeting to discuss, with all special schools in attendance so a single version is given, to avoid any mixed messages between schools. - Concern about how pupil averages have been calculated as these seem to be at odds with LAs. Action: NA to co-ordinate two separate meetings to be arranged between schools and Finance to discuss the banding review and impact on schools. One meeting will be specifically for Special Schools and the other to be non-special maintained.
6. Closing Comments – BS thanked everyone for attending and their contributions. The next meeting will take place in person on Tuesday 7 th October 2025, in the council chamber.	

Actions from meeting 09.09.25

Item	Action	Responsibility
Review Terms of Reference for High Needs & Early Years Subgroup	Groups to meet in September and review/approve their Terms of Reference and membership including identifying new Chairs for the next academic year. Will then bring this back to Forum meeting in October for approval.	Item carried over
Training Review & Future Meeting Arrangements	AP to send out a survey regarding training and then arrange training accordingly.	Partially completed – Future training to be arranged.
Review Constitution & Membership Review	Ensure wording is consistent throughout the document just use one word (category/type) and clarify removal of member if misses 3 consecutive meetings. Note when a ballot takes place confirm this will be confidential.	AP/BS/DC
Review Constitution & Membership Review	Finance Director (151 Officer) and Cllr O'Brien will always be on the distribution list for meetings.	HB
Review Constitution & Membership Review	Role of Shadow/Substitute members to be clarified.	AP/BS/DC
Review Constitution & Membership Review	TE to send email to AP/BS with specific points he has raised	TE/AP/BS
Review Constitution & Membership Review	Agreed that the issue of representation in Primary Maintained sector is to be further discussed at Primary Forum on 19/9/25 – whether to agree a 50% or 1/3 split between HT/Governors.	Primary Forum
Review Constitution & Membership Review	Revised constitution to be re-circulated to members with amendments once primary forum has made a decision regarding primary maintained sector.	AP/BS/DC
School Block Transfer	NA to amend table in section 5 – 25/26, to include an indicative prediction. Section 6 to be reworded to highlight the indicative impact pupil numbers will have on secondary schools – not just primary. Ensure that each table refers to a financial year or academic year.	NA
School Block Transfer	DC/NK to raise issue of traded SAS service at HASH and Primary Forum.	DC/NK
School Block Transfer	AP to provide an update at October SF meeting in regard to ESF and its impact as well as SENDEX.	AP
School Block Transfer	NA to provide an analysis that shows the overall impact of what the SBT would be to individual school budgets.	NA
Education Statutory Duties De-delegation.	A survey to be sent to maintained schools tomorrow 10.09.25, schools will have until 26 th September to respond. SF members will be asked to vote in October meeting on the proposal requesting Education Statutory Duties De-delegation.	AP/NA/HB
Top Up Payment Changes	NA to co-ordinate two separate meetings to be arranged between schools and Finance to discuss the banding review and its implications. One with special schools the other to be with non-special maintained.	NA
Top Up Payment Changes	NA offered all schools the opportunity to work on an individual basis to resolve any issues.	NA

Update on action items 08.07.2025

Item	Action	UPDATE
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Review Constitution for Schools forum & Membership Review	AP/BS/DC will reflect on views of the group and look to return a constitution that provides a balance between the historic memory with a mechanism to allow new voices and new members to join.	Completed
Review Constitution for Schools forum & Membership Review	AP to add item to the Constitution regarding the attendance of LA Officers and who is invited to Forums.	Completed
Review Constitution for Schools forum & Membership Review	Profile of Schools Forum to be raised with more communications being sent out by the LA.	Completed
Review Constitution for Schools forum & Membership Review	New Constitution and a transition arrangement will be brought to Schools Forum meeting on 9 th September.	Completed
Review Terms of Reference for High Needs & Early Years Subgroup	EC will review Early Years ToR and membership and email AP with comments.	Completed
Review Terms of Reference for High Needs & Early Years Subgroup	Groups to meet in September and review/approve their Terms of Reference and membership including identifying new Chairs for the next academic year. Will then bring this back to Forum meeting in October for approval.	Item carried over
Review Terms of Reference for High Needs & Early Years Subgroup	HB to cancel HN Group scheduled for 17 th July circulate new dates for both HN and EY for September these meetings will focus on ToR's and appointing Chairs.	Completed
Training Review & Future Meeting Arrangements	AP to send out a survey regarding training and then arrange training accordingly.	Partially completed – Future training to be arranged.
Training Review & Future Meeting Arrangements	HB to share meeting invites for next academic year.	Completed
2024-25 DSG Outturn	When reviewing schools block allocations, reports must identify where the £849K is and track where it is to be distributed to ensure visibility and clarity.	Completed Information for future papers
2024-25 DSG Outturn	All finance reports must contain greater narrative and details behind the numbers to ensure clarity and transparency for Forum members.	Completed Information for future papers