



HILLINGDON SCHOOLS FORUM MINUTES

Tuesday 7th October 2025 at 1pm Committee Room 5, Civic Centre

Voting Members

NAME	ORGANISATION	ROLE	ATTENDANCE	TERM ENDS
Maintained Nursery (1)				
Shabana Aslam	McMillan Early Childhood Centre	Headteacher	Apologies	Sep 2026
Maintained Primary (6)				
Vacancy x 1				
Carly Rissen	Colham Manor	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2028
John Buckingham	Glebe School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Jo Palmer	Hillside Infant & Junior Schools and Minet Junior School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Tony Eginton	Minet Infant & Nursery Schools and Hillside Junior School	Governor	Apologies	Sep 2028
Phil Haigh	Cherry Lane Primary School & Meadow High School	Governor	Attended	Sep 2028
Maintained Secondary (1)				
Dan Cowling (VICE CHAIR)	Oak Wood School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2026
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	Attended	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	Apologies	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	Apologies	Sep 2027
14-19 Partnership (1)				
Vacancy				
Diocesan Representative (1)				
Nicola Dallibar	St Andrews CofE Primary School	Headteacher	Attended	Sep 2029

Other attendees (non-voting)

NAME	REPRESENTING	ROLE
Observers		
Graham Cunningham	Meadow High	Headteacher
Nicky Bulpett	Ruislip Gardens	Headteacher
Bryony Smith	Hedgewood Primary School	Co-Headteacher
Heidi Faure	Rosedale College	COO
Manjit Bringan	Whitehall Infants School	Headteacher
Helen Brown	Warrender Primary School	Headteacher
Vicky Jarvis	Field End Primary School	Headteacher
Simon Warne	NEU	NEU Representative
LA Officers in attendance		

Ndenko Asong	LA Strategic Finance Consultant
Gary Binstead	LA Head of Education & SEND Commissioning
Helen Boundy	LA (Clerk)
Luisa Hansen	LA Head of Children's Finance
Steve Muldoon	Corporate Director of Finance
Abi Preston	Director of Education & SEND
Philip Ryan	Portage & FIS Service Manager

Item	
1.	Welcome, apologies & opening comments. - BS welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the first in-person meeting of the academic year. - Apologies have been received from Tony Eginton, Naazish Haq, Laurie Cornwell, Louise Crook, Sudhi Pathak, Shabana Alsam. It was noted that Jonathan Jacobs and Kris O'Sullivan have stepped down as Forum members.
2.	Minutes and actions from previous meeting 09.09.2025 - Most actions on agenda from previous meeting have been completed, any outstanding items are included on this meeting's agenda. Details of actions are outlined on table at end of agenda. - Minutes of last SF meeting held on 09.09.2025 were AGREED as a true and accurate account.
3. Items for Decision	
a)	Review Constitution & Membership Review - Following previous meetings at which most of the constitution was completed and agreed with by members. AP received TE's written feedback and has been taken into consideration. Ensuring an appropriate balance in the membership from the Maintained and Academy sector. - NE provided feedback from Headteachers at the Primary Forum who would like there to be a minimum 50% of Headteachers in any one sector but with the main focus being Primary Maintained Sector. - Currently Primary Maintained sector has 4 governors and 2 Headteachers. In order to redress this balance, there are a few options: governors can review between them which three should remain and one governor could step down as a voting member (they are very welcome to continue to attend and contribute to meetings). This would leave another vacancy for a headteacher to join this category. The other option to reach the 50/50 balance is for the Primary maintained sector to temporarily increase the numbers of members until the terms of office expire in 3 years. - Governors noted that it is excellent that more headteachers wish to be part of forum and that they will discuss amongst themselves as to who will relinquish their membership of the forum. Action: The 4 governors who are currently members of the Maintained Primary Sector will agree amongst themselves who will step down as a voting member to enable a 50/50 split of governors and headteachers in this sector. They will communicate the outcome to BS. - AP clarified that the Shadow role is not a formal category within Schools Forum and not part of the formal constitution. Not all categories of membership had shadow reps. However, it would be perfectly acceptable for members to agree a substitute from the same category (maintained primary etc.) to cover for them in their absence. - Any vacancies within sectors will be advertised and anyone can put forward a nomination. Governors will be made aware of these vacancies through Headteachers/Clerks and Chairs of Governors. - BS asked for clarification and consistency in section 5.1d and 5.5 regarding a member being removed for non-attendance. It was agreed that the wording should be if they fail to attend 3 meetings in a row. Action: AP to amend the wording of the Constitution in 5.1d and 5.5 that members remain in office unless they fail to attend 3 meetings in a row. - AP noted that as is stated in the Constitution, it will be reviewed annually. Proposal: Schools Forum members were invited to vote on adopting the new Constitution (with agreed amendments) Decision: Schools Forum unanimously agreed to formally agree the new Constitution.
b)	School Block Transfer – Consultation outcome and decision

	- Following on from the consultation on Schools Block Transfer, AP shared a detailed summary of the outcome with forum members, following the consultation finishing yesterday. Additional comments and recurring themes were outlined. Comments included feeling that government funding should be higher, with the SEND reforms imminent waiting for the outcome of this, as expect a benefit for the High Needs Block to be included. - Schools asked about when the safety valve funding is released. The LA has been asking DfE about this and, whilst we do not know when any outcome will be shared, they will likely release a decision once SEND reforms are known. - From the consultation with all schools, the outcome was: 27% voted in favour of the 1% transfer. 73% voted against the 1% transfer. - AP felt that some schools aren't aware of what is offered through non-statutory support such as SENDEX. - ESF is used for closing the gap - not for those with EHCPs but above SEND support, evidence has shown that with this intensive support in some cases a plan can be avoided. - LBH is looking at what is offered and appreciate that some schools use SAS more than others. AP requested feedback from schools on the services are currently delivered and if there are services that are required. - Despite requests, there is no legitimate way to give different amounts in the school block transfer. - AP outlined in London, LBH is ranked the 8th lowest for % of children with EHCPs in mainstream schools. We ranked 3rd highest for placing children in special schools. LBH is an outlier, and we need to strike a balance – wide spectrum of needs in special schools. PH noted that it could be seen that we are better at supporting our SEND children and they are in the appropriate settings. - LBH has reduced numbers of children in independent settings - 418 reduced to 276 which has resulted in savings. - DC requested clarification on absolute numbers used in the benchmarking - do we have more children than other areas – is the % relevant to proportion? Dependent upon data used, ranking will change. - AP noted concern if the pre-statutory funding is paused. If we don't have the 1% approved, any funding available will be prioritised first for schools with a disproportionate % of EHCPs due to the impact this has on budgets. Varying practices of inclusion across the borough. - Issue of parental choice and for 99% of tribunals are in favour of parents so children end up in a special school. - SF members felt that the mainstream schools are competing with each other, and a HT's priority is to balance budgets for their individual schools which is why overall HTs are not supportive of this proposal. Action: AP to resend recent ESF documents to all schools Action: AP to share papers on outcome of the consultation DECISION: Proposal: Schools Forum members invited to vote in capacity of representation of the sectors they are from as to whether they were in favour of supporting the request by the LA for 1% Schools Block Transfer. Votes against the Proposal – 11 Votes in favour of the proposal 2 - Following a question from DC, AP clarified that the LA cannot reconsider the proposal as schools do need the pre-statutory funding support and the budget is too tight to do this without the 1% transfer. A disapplication for 1% for Schools Block Transfer will be made by the council to the DfE. All consultation feedback, including voting outcomes and minutes, will be clear in the information shared with the DfE that the majority of Forum is not supportive as part of the 1% transfer this process. This will then be reviewed by the Secretary of State for a decision. Key risk for schools if 1% is not given is that the LA will not be in a position to offer the non-statutory funding that is currently in place.
c)	Education Statutory Duties De-delegation - Consultation outcome and decision - AP outlined that 90% of responses received were against the proposal for education statutory duties de-delegation. - Schools seem to be unclear on what the request is relating to (statutory duties) as suggestions were made that it could be a buy in service. The LA has a statutory duty that cannot be delegated and this is what the request is relating to. Schools receive a variety of support (including School

	Improvement, Ofsted etc) from the LA at different times depending on their needs. Some similarities to the top slicing of funding in academies. - The LA is not charging schools for full service – it is a contribution towards the overall costs (£217k contribution towards £776k costs). Schools are not charged for statutory school improvement or the Free School Meal checking service, which has recently identified more funding for schools (1113 new FSM children identified, attracting £1.4m for schools) than the contribution requested. - ND noted that as a Voluntary Aided school, they are caught in the middle between what the Diocese provides and what the LA provides. AP clarified that the statutory duties in place remain the responsibility of the LA although some elements are different for VA schools DECISION: Proposal: Schools Forum members (maintained Primary and Secondary) were invited to vote in capacity of representing their sector as to whether they were in favour of supporting the request by the LA for Education Statutory Duties De-delegation Votes against the Proposal – 5 Votes in favour of the proposal 0
d)	Proposed Consultations – Schools Block NFF - ND outlined that unfortunately we don't currently have all the information that is needed yet as the DfE have delayed publishing the actual funding factors, in order to provide some modelling but actual figures are not yet available. Expect to receive these at the end of October. However, the paper does need to be agreed in principle. - NFF – LBH mirrors this when the allocation of the schools block is completed. - Keep within the 2.5% of published recommendations. - In the wider context around the NFF, despite figures not being published, an indication has been given. Several grants will be rolled into this. NA has outlined this and a table in the index shows what is included in the formula. Inflation is at 1.5-2% but any uplift resulting from this is still to be confirmed. - Clarified that there is no change from the approach last year. - SF members asked if all acronyms can be explained in papers (written in full or explanations given) Action: NA to remove all acronyms from all finance documents and add explanations where necessary DECISION: Proposal: Schools Forum members were invited to vote in capacity of representing their sector as to whether they were in favour of supporting the School Funding Formula Paper Votes against the Proposal – 0 Votes in favour of the proposal 12
e)	Scheme for Financing Schools - April 2025-March 2026 - LH outlined that all this paper is based on rules and guidance set by the DfE, they are not based on the agenda of the LA. - BS acknowledged the challenge of the DfE being late to publish guidance but need to close the window on when this is brought to Schools Forum for approval. Cannot be approving something for the current financial year when we are 6 months into that year. - LH pledged that this gap will be closed and for next year (2026-2027) and the Scheme for Financing Schools will be brought to Forum in March 2026 or July 2026 at the latest. - Highlighted the change from 52 weeks to 39 weeks for top-up funding, LIBOR has been replaced by SONIA as measure of average interest rates, change to financial controls inventory now over £1K rather than £250. Action: 2026-2027 Scheme for Financing Schools will be brought to Forum in March 2026 or July 2026 at the latest. - PH raised the issue of point 3.2 Top up fundings – This change has had a significant impact on special schools. Top up funding is a major part of their income and the change to 39 weeks will affect cashflow in Aug/Sept. - SM acknowledged this was an issue and will review this issue. If it is found there is a cashflow problem for schools, then a cash advance can be arranged, this will be reviewed on a school-by-school basis. Do not anticipate this to be an issue in subsequent years, just the first year of funding. It ensures that funding for each child is always up to date and schools are paid as soon as the top up funding is due.

	- Impact of 39 weeks rather than 52 weeks is significant and will have an impact on when reviews are due and new plans created which do need to be budgeted for. DC to highlight this issue to mainstream schools through HASH. Action: Any schools adversely impacted by the change to 39 weeks funding for top up funding, cash advances can be arranged, and the LA will review on a school-by-school basis Action: DC to highlight to mainstream schools through HASH the change to 39 weeks for top-up funding to ensure schools are aware of this. - DC noted that he is unable to vote for this due to section 4.5 which refers to the inherited deficit issue as it doesn't allow or account for it. Wording for section 4.5-4.9 needs to be amended. Action: SM/LH/NA to find alternative wording for section 4.5-4.9 in regard to planning for a deficit budget. DECISION: Proposal: Schools Forum members were invited to vote in capacity of representing their sector as to whether they were in favour of supporting the Scheme for Financing Schools paper on the condition that satisfactory amendments were made to sections 4.5 to 4.9. Votes against the Proposal – 0 Votes in favour of the proposal 6 Abstention - 1
f)	De-delegation - Pension admin 2026/2027 (financial year) - Outlined the de-delegated amount reflects a contribution to the cost of the post responsible for the maintenance and reconciliation of Teachers Pensions payments, the identification and follow-up of any queries with schools and payroll providers and the payment of deductions to the Teachers Pensions Agency - Cost is £1.47 per pupil for this function. It is an increase from £1.28, but there has been no increase in this cost for many years. DECISION: Proposal: Schools Forum members representing maintained schools were invited to vote in capacity of representing their sector to de-delegate the Teachers Pensions Administration for Maintained Schools for FY2026-27 Votes against– 0 Votes in favour - 7
g)	De-delegation - Trade Union Facilities Time 2026/2027 (financial year) i) Voting to de-delegate (item 2.2 in supporting papers) ii) If yes to i) voting on the per pupil funding (item 2.3 in supporting papers) Simon Warne, Hillingdon National Education Union presented the paper which had been shared. Simon presented the following: - LBH is an outlier in choosing not to de-delegate, The Hillingdon National Education Union (NEU) is recommending that Schools Forum returns to de-delegated funding for Trade Union Facilities Time which was last in place in 2023. - per pupil funding is adjusted to reflect the increased school funding in 2023 and the requirement for appropriate levels of release time for branch. A yearly funding figure to be de-delegated for Trade Union Facility Time is £4.00 per pupil in a maintained secondary school and £3.00 per pupil in a maintained primary school. - All academies receive funding to contribute to facilities time. The NEU recommends that all academy schools in the London Borough of Hillingdon should buy into the facilities funding agreement at the same rate as the maintained schools. - Until 2023, Hillingdon maintained a de-delegated fund intended for compensating the paid release of local officers representing school trade unions. However, in December 2023, Forum raised concerns regarding the lack of evidence of how the money was spent and its impact, and issues of transparency and fairness in relation to not all academies choosing to pay into the pot. The trade unions have committed to continuing to provide termly reports on trade union duties and have acknowledged the issue of fairness in respect of the funding only being taken from maintained schools and some academies. It has developed fairer casework strategies to address this.

	- If de-delegation is agreed by the Forum, Hillingdon Council have agreed to hold a one cost centre for trade union activity, all income and expenditure will be coded to this cost centre, this will hold de-delegated funds. Questions and comments from Form Members to Simon: - DC questioned whether all unions would be able to draw from this funding? SW confirmed that they would, although GMB haven't had a branch secretary for some time, which is why there has been a surplus. A surplus would remain if any particular union doesn't draw from it. If there was a surplus in funds, money could be returned to schools. - SF members noted that the contribution and cost of £38K for the cost of a case worker 2 days per week seems very high. . - Are you actively looking to work with other unions? SW confirmed they were actively trying to work with other unions. - RL noted that another SF in Barking & Dagenham where the amount, despite having recently been reduced, is still significantly higher than the per pupil funding being sought in Hillingdon. DECISION: Proposal: Schools Forum members (maintained Primary and Secondary) were invited to vote in capacity of representing their sector as to whether they were in favour of supporting the request to return to de-delegated funding for Trade Union Facilities Time Votes against the Proposal – 4 Votes in favour of the proposal – 3
4. Items for Information	
	2025/2026 DSG Budget Monitoring – - This report provided a brief summary of the DSG forecast position at month 5 of the monitoring cycle. - The forecast is measured against the updated DSG allocations for FY2025-26 published in July 2025. - Month 5 forecast in-year £12.5m deficit - better than previous projections and striving to reduce this further.
5. AOB	
	Surveys have been sent in regard to nomination for Chairs of the Sub-groups - High Needs funding block and Early Years. Individuals do not need to be members of forum but have a link with it. Thanked those for the nominations that have come through.
6. Next Meeting Date	
Next meeting will be held on Thursday 15 th January @ 1pm (online).	
7. Closing Comments	

Agreed actions 07.10.25.

Item	Action	Responsibility
3a	The 4 governors who are currently members of the Maintained Primary Sector will agree amongst themselves who will step down as a voting member to enable a 50/50 split of governors and headteachers in this sector. They will communicate the outcome to BS.	Primary Maintained Governors
3a	AP to amend the wording of the Constitution in 5.1d and 5.5 that members remain in office unless they fail to attend 3 meetings in a row.	AP
3b	AP to resend recent ESF documents to all schools	AP
3b	AP to share slides on outcome of the consultation	AP
3d	NA to remove all acronyms from all finance documents and add explanations where necessary	NA
3e	2026-2027 Scheme for Financing Schools will be brought to Forum in March 2026 or July 2026 at the latest.	Finance Team
3e	Any schools adversely impacted by the change to 39 weeks funding for top up funding, cash advances can be arranged, and the LA will review on a school-by-school basis	Finance Team
3e	DC to highlight to mainstream schools through HASH the change to 39 weeks for top-up funding to ensure schools are aware of this.	DC
3e	SM/LH/NA to find alternative wording for section 4.5-4.9 in regard to planning for a deficit budget.	SM/LH/NA

