

Minutes of Schools Forum Meeting 19th February 2024 at 3.30 pm

Members	Position	Voting	Attendance
Vacancy	Primary Maintained Headteacher	Voting	In process
Vacancy (None in Medway)	Special Maintained Headteacher	Voting	n/a
Victoria Richmond	Primary Academy Headteacher	Voting	Absent
Paul Jackson (Vice Chair)	Secondary Academy Headteacher	Voting	Absent
Marie Woolston (Marie Sweetlove -Smyth standing in)	Special/PRU Academy Headteacher	Voting	
Kyle Taylor	CFO Multi Academy Trust	Voting	Present
Richard Warnham	Governor Primary Maintained	Voting	Present
Barbara Fincham	Governor Primary Academy	Voting	Present
Vacancy	Governor Secondary Maintained	Voting	n/a
Peter Martin (Chair)	Governor Secondary Academy	Voting	Absent
Justin Stuart	Governor Special and PRU	Voting	Present
Hannah Cartwright	Early Years Representative	Non-voting	Absent
Simon Cook	16-19 Provider Representative	Non-voting	Absent
Hillary Sanders.	C of E Diocese Representative	Voting	Apologies
Vacancy	RC Diocese Representative	Voting	n/a
Vacancy	Teaching Unions Representative	Non-voting	n/a
Stuart Gardner	CEO Multi Academy Trust	Voting	Absent
Elizabeth Halton	SPI over 19 Provisions	Non-voting	Present
In Attendance			
Celia Buxton	Assistant Director of Education and SEND LA		Present
Maria Beaney	Finance Business Partner LA		Present
Sarah Phillipson	Governance Professional		Present
Tracey Coombs	Portfolio Holder for Education		N/A
Paul Clarke	Strategic Head of Education; Planning and Access		N/A
Leanne Farach	Director of Children Services		N/A
Neil Stollery	Local Authority		Present
Deborah Allcorn	Head of Early Years		Present

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Clare Hassell	Pupil Funding Officer		Present
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1. Welcome, attendance and apologies:
As noted above.
Victoria Richmond, Paul Jackson, Peter Jackson, Hannah Cartwright, Simon Cook and Stuart Gardiner were absent.
2. Declaration of Interests:
No changes to the previously disclosed Declaration of Interests and any matters relevant to the agenda.
3. Minutes from the previous meeting 10th January 2024
Accuracy:
Deferred to the next meeting
Matters Arising:
Deferred to the next meeting
4. 2024-25 Schools Forum Report EYFF – Deborah Allcorn and Clare Hassell:
DA and CH referred to their previously shared report, noting several key areas of attention.

Introduction:

A new Early Years Funding formula is being introduced for children aged two and nine months to two years. This formula will calculate the hourly funded rate providers will receive. Existing arrangements for the Early Years Funding are being revised following consultation with providers, and Schools forum members are requested to consider the proposed changes.

Background information for funding:

The current two-year-old hourly rate is a flat rate for all providers and is available for eligible children of families receiving some additional forms of government support. With the introduction of the new entitlements for working families, Local Authorities must extend Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funds (SENIF) for all children with special educational needs and have deprivation supplement arrangements for the disadvantaged two-year-old entitlement and the new working parent entitlements.

Early Years provider's funding comprises a basic hourly rate and supplements known as the Early Years Funding Formula (EYFF). Currently, the supplements consist of:

- A payment for a leadership qualification
- A quality payment if the setting has achieved an Ofsted Inspection grading of Good or Outstanding.
- An additional supplement for the deprivation score for the setting, which is calculated using the income deprivation affecting children index or the IDACI score of where the children are from attending the setting.
- A teacher's pay and pension grant for qualified teachers employed in maintained schools and academies.

Change of process:

It was explained that the two-year-old funding has historically been paid to providers using a flat rate with no access to special educational needs inclusion funds. From 2024-25, the Government is introducing funding for children of working families aged two years and under, and the funding rates should consist of a base rate, supplements, and contingency funding. It is proposed that the EYFF will be introduced for the two-year-olds and 9-month-to-two-year-old rates. The funding rate will consist of a base rate and supplements for additional needs, leadership, and quality.

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The consultation asks providers for comments on the following:

The Schools forum noted the introduction of a funding formula for children aged two years and under aligns with the current three and four-year-old funding formula.

Financial Calculations:

It was stated if the 2023-24 existing local Early Years Funding Formula is used to calculate the two-year-old hourly rate, the average provider hourly rate will increase by 11p per hour from £7.30 to £7.41 per hour. The new average provider hourly rate for children aged 9 months to two years will be £9.97.

Consultation response:

The consultation closed on 05th February 2024, and comments were requested via an electronic survey form that went out to all providers.

The Schools forum members noted very few comments were received, with 21 settings responding. The answers to some of the comments made were within the actual consultation document sent. The Schools forum was supplied with example responses from some childminders, day nurseries, preschools, and the Local Authority replies.

Q – Does this only affect 2-year-olds and younger and not 3-year-olds in nursery?

A - No, it does not affect them. It just aligns the two-year-olds with the current three-year forum, which is centrally distributed.

The Schools Forum members considered and voted on the following points:

Decision - The Schools' forum voted and agreed to accept the proposed changes to the existing arrangements of the Early Years Funding Formula to include children aged two and children aged nine months to two years.

Decision – The Schools' forum voted and agreed to accept the proposed increase to the provider hour rates by 11p per hour from £7.30 to £7.41 per hour for 2-year-olds. The new average provider hourly rate for children aged 9 months to two years will be £9.97.

5. AOB:
None.