

# Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) Agenda 9 November 2023

2.30 pm

Remote Meeting

Via MS Teams invite

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## Date of next programmed WSF meeting

Thursday 11 January 2024 at 2.30 pm remote meeting to be held via MS Teams

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM (WSF)**

**Wednesday 21 September 2023  
Remote Meeting Held Via MS Teams**

**The meeting started at 2.30 PM.**

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

#### **a. WSF Members**

Malcolm Richards (Chair) [MR]	- Governor, Bromsgrove
Bryn Thomas (Vice Chair) [BT]	- HT Wolverley CE Secondary School
Marie Pearse [MP]	- HT Evesham Nursery School
Jo Kelleher [JK]	- Governor, Bredon Hill Academy
Annette Summers [AS]	- Nursery Owner
Lorraine Petersen [LP]	- Governor, Bromsgrove
Vivek Shah [VS]	- Nursery Owner
Jay Hart [JH]	- HT Kingfisher

#### **b. Local Authority (LA)**

Sarah Wilkins [SW]	- Director of Education and Early Help Worcestershire Children First
Mel Barnet [MB]	- Director of All Age Disability Services – Worcestershire Children First
Chris Bird [CBi]	- Acting Director of Resources Worcestershire Children First
Caroline Brand [CBr]	- Schools Finance Manager – Worcestershire Children First
Rob Phillips [RP]	- Finance Business Partner - Schools - Worcestershire Children First
Ruth Bessant [RB]	- Finance Business Partner - Schools - Worcestershire Children First

### **1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Malcolm Richards – Nominated by BT and vote unanimous.

Bryn Thomas – nominated by JH and unanimous.

### **2. Welcome**

CBi – welcome as new Acting Director of Resources Worcestershire Children First.

### 3. Apologies

- |                               |                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ed Francis [EF]               | - HT Fort Royal Primary School                                                               |
| Councillor Tracey Onslow [TO] | - Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills, Worcestershire County Council |

### 4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

CBi as a Volunteer Foundation Director of Our Lady of Magnificat Multi-Academy Trust and a family member who runs a nursery provision.

### 5. DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTERESTS WITH ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

LP for Agenda Item 14 as Chadsgrove is properly one of the largest users of this item and whatever the outcome will have an impact on this school.

### 6. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (22 June 2023)

Minutes agreed.

### 7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None raised.

### 8. WSF Attendance Academic Year 2022 to 2023

The attendance for academic year and the constitution of the school forum.

We have several vacancies and want to maintain the group and recruit members to keep a balanced group. SW to write to the headteacher phase groups to ask for member to the WSF.

Governor vacancies, it is agreed that Worcester Children First (WCF) will email out to as many governors to seek membership applications to WSF. MR also suggested that it may also be appropriate to amend the constitution of WSF and its membership and who can elect members going forward.

RP to seek legal confirmation of changes to the constitution and find out the process. This is to be brought back to the pre-meeting.

### 9. Cabinet Report Financial Verbal update

CBi gave an update on the financial position of the county council, with pressures of £30 million underlying this year. We have one off funding to bring this figure down to £18 million.

This is mostly down to three areas, Children Social Care, Adult Social Care, and Home to School Transport, which are demand led services.

The £30 million does not include the DSG overspend, which is forecast to increase by a further £8 million this year.

BT asked, how close the county council is to a Section 114 notice, CBi confirmed that this is not presently on the table, and we are probably in the middle of the pack.

## **10. School and LA Funding overview**

### a) Indicative DSG rates for 2024/25

RP went through the report submitted to WSF, and that we will not know the exact figure until December.

LP asked if the £10,000 per place will be the same? RP confirmed that this will be the same for next year.

JH asked should we have a lobby group to increase the £10,000? BT confirmed that this would be go against government plans as looking at the option of transferring more children from special schools into mainstream SW also confirmed that the WCF will continue to look at this going forward and will continue to lobby and make this point were appropriate.

### b) School Block

RP presented the paper. No questions

### c) HLN Block

#### i. Funding PRUs/AP 2024/25

RP presented the paper. No questions

SW asked what Unity will receive, but this will need to be calculated as they have only just opened in September 2023.

### d) Early Year Block

#### i. Early Years Supplementary Grant

RP presented the paper.

VS confirmed that this is a hard year and emphasised the need to increase the salaries of staff to retain and to recruit new staff

SW confirmed that this is challenging for both the sector and the council.

RP confirmed that we are having EY briefings next week.

LP suggested, due to the increase of funded age ranges, that this could also lead to an increase in the number of children with SEN . RP confirmed the Department for Education had also confirmed that you can use EY block funding to cover the additional cost of inclusion, but this is being considered very carefully as we know that the sector also needs the funding to be able to supply the places.

AS agreed with VS, staff retention is a major issue and they have never had such a large waiting list before. There is concerns on the impact of this on sufficiency. SW confirmed that the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure sufficiency, and we are continuing to assess this. We are planning more detailed work to support the sector.

MP confirmed that the majority of EY funding is taken up with staffing and that is before other costs increasing.

JH agreed with MP but suggested that there does not seem to be any recognition in the funding for the additional works needed.

ii. Early Years Changes and timetable

RP presented the paper. No questions

SW confirmed that £12 million to help implement this process. RP confirmed this is how much Worcestershire will receive and then how this is spent.

iii. Early Years Consultation – Government

RP presented the paper. No questions

No questions.

iv. Early Years Consultation – Worcestershire

RP presented the paper and asked if the following members would consider joining, VS, AS, MP, LD, and NJ. RP to invite them to a meeting to discuss the consultation before sending to the sector.

**11. Delivering Better Value in SEND & DSG Management Plan – Update**

MB presented the paper and discussed the latest position. She confirmed that we still have not received confirmation yet of a successful bid, and that the DfE have asked for additional information on what else we are going to be able to do to reduce the deficit.

MR asked if there are any constraints on the grant? MB confirmed it is not able to be used on capital projects or reducing the DSG deficit, and it needs to be used for the implementation of new processes or projects.

**12. DfE SEND AP and improvement plan change programme partnership**

MB presented the paper and confirmed that the DfE have budgeted £70 million for this change programme. We are in one of the nine regional groups.

LP asked if any changes in legislation was discussed. MB and BT thought that this was definitely a consideration that was being looked into as part of this project. They also confirmed that it would support future legislation would also raise the profile of NHS England in the support of individual of all ages.

MB & BT both felt it is not about more money but about using the money that you have more efficiently to meet the needs of the individuals of all ages.

BT agreed with MB that each area has a 'Local Area Inclusion Plan'. The challenge will be getting the communication right and getting them, all involved.

SW confirmed that the communication would go through the school phase leads so that they can share this with the individual schools and other mechanisms for the early years sector.

### **13. Scheme for Financing Schools**

RP presented the paper with changes going forward to the Scheme for Financing Schools.

No comment read and then voted that this was approved.

### **14. Equipment Policy**

MB raised this agenda item with WSF. She confirmed they are looking at a policy document going forward. Due to the complexity of need where most requests have been around £4k to £5k each. With some of these items only being for short term use before the pupil outgrows them or needs something else.

LP raised that her belief is that a lot of the need for the equipment is due to health issues rather than educational need, as a result there should be more of a split between health and education, with a lot of specific equipment being needed which cannot be used by other pupils afterwards.

MP recommended the use of a central store for all equipment.

BT commented, when visiting a special school recently, was that a pupil's equipment was needed so that they could attend school rather than needed to educate the pupil.

MB stated we need to have a policy for the use and funding of equipment, so we have a way forward for all stake holders.

SW confirmed that there is three parts of this, linked to the pupil's care plan and purchase, second the storage, and third the administration, health and safety, and repair of the equipment.

Agreed this is a complex area that needed to be considered which would also impact the HNB.

### **15. Teacher Pay Additional Grant**

RP present the paper for reference to the school.

No comments

### **16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

### **Meeting ended.**

The meeting closed at 4.15 PM.

### **Date of next meeting**

The date of the next WSF meeting: - Thursday 9 November 2023 at 2.30 PM  
(Remote Meeting - MS Teams)

## **Report to the Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) Indicative DSG (Dedicated School Grant) rates for 2024/25**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To update WSF on the funding rates for the DSG for the financial year 2024/25 and the comparison of DSG funding. We are not able to give all the blocks information, the Early Years as this is calculated differently and is not available until towards the end of December, if the Department for Education (DfE) continues to normal timescales for previous years.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The funding rates for the financial year 2023/24 are as listed below:
- Primary Unit of Funding (PUF) **£4,751.58** per primary school pupils in mainstream schools.
  - Secondary Unit of Funding (SUF) **£6,107.94** per secondary aged pupils in mainstream schools.
  - Premises factors including, Private Finance Initiative (PFI), Rates, Split Site, and Exceptional Premises.
- 2.2 The allocation of Mainstream Schools Additional Grant (MSAG) for the financial year is £13,584,112, to Worcestershire schools, which is becoming part of the school block within 2024/25. This equated to approximately 3.36% of additional grant funding on top of the DSG in this year.
- 2.3 With all the above factors which therefore is an average of £5,599.23 per pupil on the October census excluding Growth funding.
- 2.4 The High Needs (HN) Block is calculated using several distinct factors which include historical spend.
- 2.5 The Department for Education have had to recalculate the full DSG for the school block after using the wrong pupil numbers for the calculation, we have received an apology and they are investigating how this happened. This has reduced Worcestershire provision allocation of funding by circa £3.72 million.

### **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 The current information from the DfE is showing us as having the following for the financial year 2024/25:
- Primary Unit of Funding (PUF) **£5,005.77** per primary school pupils in mainstream schools.
  - Secondary Unit of Funding (SUF) **£6,428.44** per secondary aged pupils in mainstream schools.
  - Premises factors including, Private Finance Initiative (PFI), Rates, Split Site, and Exceptional Premises, with all apart from the PFI reducing in 2024/25.
- 3.2 This is an increase of £254.19 per primary pupil (5.35% increase) and £320.50 per secondary pupil (5.25% increase).
- 3.3 Considering the MSAG being incorporated in the school block and the reduction on the premises factors, this gives an average per pupil of £5,693.42. This is an overall increase on the funding school block per pupil amount of 1.68%.
- 3.4 All this information will change when the actual pupil numbers are known after the October 2023 census, with the breakdown of the pupils moving from primary to secondary and new pupils starting.



- 3.5 The high needs block is estimated to increase by 4.3% from last year but again this is including the incorporation of the additional grant funding.
- 3.6 Appendix A gives a breakdown for the 2023/24 DSG compared to the indicative figures 2024/25. This information excludes Early Years as this is not known at present.

**4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 To note and discuss.

Robert Phillips  
Finance Business Partner - Schools  
Worcestershire Children First  
September 2023

Worcestershire 885 - Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) - Schools, Central Schools Services And High Needs Only  
2023-24 Latest July 2023 Vs. 2024-25 Initial July 2023

	<u>2023-24</u>		<u>2024-25</u>		<u>Variance</u>		<u>Comments</u>			
	Latest July 2023		Provisional July 2023							
	Units Of Funding	Pupil Nos. October 2022	Units Of Funding	Pupil Nos. October 2021	Units Of Funding	Pupil Nos.				
	£	£'m	£	£'m	£'m	%				
<b>Schools Block (SB)</b>										
Primary Unit of Funding (PUF)	4,751.58	43780.5	208.027	5,005.77	43780.5	219.155	254.19	0	11.128	) Updated using the DfE 2023-24 PUF and SUF.
Secondary Unit of Funding (SUF)	6,107.94	30749.0	187.813	6,428.44	30749.0	197.668	320.50	0	9.855	) Will be updated for the October 2023 pupil numbers.
		74529.5	395.840		74529.5	416.823		0.0	20.983	
Historic Premises			7.884			7.505			-0.378	See Below.
Formulaic Pupil Growth Fund			0.000			0.000			0.000	Not notified so have removed at present for comparison. 2023/24 £2.139165m
<b>=SB</b>			<b>403.723</b>			<b>424.328</b>			<b>20.605</b>	<b>5.10%</b> This % changes to 1.68% when taking into account the Mainstream School Additional Grant for 2023/24
<b>Central School Services Block (CSSB)</b>										
Formulaic CSS NFF			2.718			2.824			0.105	) Reflects DfE policy to reduce the allocations of all LAs by a further 20%.
Historic Commitments			0.614			0.492			-0.123	) Significant impact for the Early Intervention Family Support Service (EIFS).
<b>=CSSB</b>			<b>3.332</b>			<b>3.315</b>			<b>-0.017</b>	<b>-0.52%</b>
<b>High Needs Block (HNB)</b>										
Formulaic HN NFF			85.964			89.607			3.643	
<b>=HNB</b>			<b>85.964</b>			<b>89.607</b>			<b>3.643</b>	<b>4.24%</b>
<b>= Total Gross DSG Excluding Early Years</b>			<b>493.019</b>			<b>517.250</b>			<b>24.231</b>	<b>4.91%</b>

**Notes**

This is the **Gross DSG** indicative allocation **Prior to** academy and high needs places recoupment.  
This analysis excludes the EY DSG.

Historic Premises

21-22 APT Baseline			23-24 APT Baseline			
Split Site		0.566	Split Site		0.299	)
Rates		3.981	Rates		3.827	)
Exceptional Premises		0.369	Exceptional Premises		0.104	) Within this section we have made some assumption to match the funding
PFI	Baseline + RPI(X)		PFI	Baseline + RPI(X)		) this is likely to be a different split when exact figures known and different %
	£2.641 + 1.0156%	2.967		£2.967 + 10.4%	3.276	) increases.
		<b>7.884</b>			<b>7.505</b>	)

## Report to the Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) School Block Changes

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To brief changes within the school block funding area for financial year 2024/25. This is being submitted due to the changes that have been made by the Department for Education in October 2023

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Appendix A, show the prior funding rates for the school funding formula.
- 2.2 Maintained schools received Mainstream Additional Supplementary Grant (MSAG) for financial year 2023/24 with the aim of being amalgamated into the school block in 2024/25
- 2.3 Low prior attainment data was based on 2019 due to the pandemic.
- 2.4 Split site was agreed by the local authority.
- 2.5 Local authorities were only funded for growth funding.

### **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 Appendix A, show the prior and proposed funding rates as well as the minimum and maximum a local authority can vary from these factors.
- 3.2 The MSAG has been used to increase the Average Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU), free school meals at any time in the last six years (FSM6), the lump sum funding rate and by raising the minimum funding floor.
- 3.3 Low prior attainment data will still use 2019 where key stage 2 (KS2) test are used as a proxy as these were cancelled due to the pandemic.
- 3.5 Split site will be formalised for financial year 2024/25. This replaces the local schools funding formula factor calculations on funding.
- 3.6 Local authorities will also receive funding for falling rolls as well as growth. A proposal of how this will work will be presented to a future WSF meeting this year and further required changes to the growth fund. Both will only take affect from financial year 2024/25 and not be retrospective.
- 3.7 Local authorities are still able to use capping/scaling back in the following circumstances to fund any Minimum Funding Guarantee levels set and to allow the funding formula to be affordable.

### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 Note the changes to the funding of schools from the school block.

Robert Phillips  
Finance Business Partner - Schools  
Worcestershire Children First  
November 2023

**Funding Rates Financial Year 2023-24 and 2024-25**

	UNIT OF RESOURCE 2023-24 £	UNIT OF RESOURCE NFF £	UNIT OF RESOURCE Lowest £	UNIT OF RESOURCE Highest £
<b><u>FORMULA COMPONENT</u></b>				
Primary AWPU	3,562.00	3,597.00	3,472.95	3,651.05
KS3 AWPU	5,022.00	5,072.00	4,896.45	5,147.55
KS4 AWPU	5,661.00	5,717.00	5,519.48	5,802.53
Primary FSM	480.00	490.00	477.75	502.25
Secondary FSM	480.00	490.00	477.75	502.25
Primary FSM 6	705.00	820.00	799.50	840.50
Secondary FSM 6	1,030.00	1,200.00	1,170.00	1,230.00
Primary IDACI Band F	230.00	235.00	229.13	240.88
Primary IDACI Band E	280.00	285.00	277.88	292.13
Primary IDACI Band D	440.00	445.00	433.88	456.13
Primary IDACI Band C	480.00	485.00	472.88	497.13
Primary IDACI Band B	510.00	515.00	502.13	527.88
Primary IDACI Band A	670.00	680.00	663.00	697.00
Secondary IDACI Band F	335.00	340.00	331.50	348.50
Secondary IDACI Band E	445.00	450.00	438.75	461.25
Secondary IDACI Band D	620.00	630.00	614.25	645.75
Secondary IDACI Band C	680.00	690.00	672.75	707.25
Secondary IDACI Band B	730.00	740.00	721.50	758.50
Secondary IDACI Band A	930.00	945.00	921.38	968.63
Primary Low Prior Attainment	1,155.00	1,170.00	1,140.75	1,199.25
Secondary Low Prior Attainment	1,750.00	1,775.00	1,730.63	1,819.38
Primary EAL	580.00	590.00	575.25	604.75
Secondary EAL	1,565.00	1,585.00	1,545.38	1,624.63
Primary Mobility	945.00	960.00	936.00	984.00
Secondary Mobility	1,360.00	1,380.00	1,345.50	1,414.50
Lump Sum	128,000.00	134,400.00	131,040.00	137,760.00
NFF Minimum Funding Levels				
Primary	4,405.00	4,665.00		
Key Stage 3	5,503.00	5,824.00		
Key Stage 4	6,033.00	6,389.00		
Secondary	5,715.00	6,050.00		
Minimum Funding Guarantee	0.50%	0.50%	0.00%	0.50%

## Report to the Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) Early Years (EY) Consultation

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 To confirm the latest position with the Single Funding Formula for Early Years consultation.

### **2. Background**

2.1 As discussed with the school forum on the 21 September 2023, the local authority intended to consult with EY providers on the future funding principles going forward. The following has happened.

- Worcester Children First (WCF) Officer created a proposal for the mechanism of funding.
- This was shared with members of the WSF with nursery provision and able to meet with us. This was four of the five requested.
- This proposal was shared with leadership within WCF.
- The consultation went live on the 27 October 2023
- The consultation will close at 5 PM on the 14 December 2023

### **3. Current Position**

3.1 The consultation is live now, and we would like to ask that you raise this with your appropriate groups so that we are able to receive as many responses as possible to take the views of the sector into account.

### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 The WSF are requesting to note the current position and raise in the areas.

**Robert Phillips**  
Finance Business Partner  
Worcestershire Children First  
November 2023

## **Report to the Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) WSF Decisions Needed**

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 To seek agreement from maintained school member on the de-delegated services for financial year 2024/25.

1.2 To seek agreement from all members that the central block should continue for financial year 2024/25 in its current form.

### **2. Background**

2.1 As in previous years the local authority need agreement to de-delegate services from maintained mainstream schools, and WSF fully for central block services.

2.2 The factors are the following:

- Schools Specific Contingency
- Support for Minority Ethnic Pupils / Underachieving Groups
- Free School Meal (FSM) Eligibility
- Trade Union Staff Cost & Duties Supply Cover

2.3 Central block services include items like:

- Copyright licences which is taken from the Designated Schools Grant (DSG)
- Family support
- School Forum
- Services to all schools.

### **3. Current Position**

3.1 We are seeking agreement from WSF that we continue these services going forward for financial year 2024/25. Academy schools can buy into FSM, Support for Minority Ethnic Pupils/Underachieving Groups and Trade Union Staff Cost & Duties Supply Cover.

3.2 We are seeking agreement from WSF that we continue the Central DSG block as per the current funding model, and services.

### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 The WSF are requesting: -

- Agree that the current de-delegated services should continue.
- Agree to continue the Central DSG block continues in current form.

### **Robert Phillips**

Finance Business Partner  
Worcestershire Children First  
November 2023

## **Report to the Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) Financial Support for Local Authorities to Support Schools in Financial Difficulty 2023 to 2024**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To brief WSF on the additional funding received by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) for Local Authorities to support schools in financial difficulty.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Government has set a pot of £40 million, of which £20 million has been allocated to local authorities who support maintained schools in financial difficulty. The allocation is based on the value of deficits as a proportion of maintained schools' income above 1%.
- 2.2 Worcestershire has been allocated £1.5m the third highest in England.
- 2.3 Schools eligible for this funding are maintained primary, middle, secondary and all - through schools, special schools, pupil referral units, and nursery schools.
- 2.4 The local authority is considering giving 50% upfront funding to the value of the savings identified following an SRMA review with a further 50% funding following the implementation of the recommendations and tangible savings to impact on the school's deficit.

### **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 WCC and Worcestershire Children First (WCF) will consider the criteria to be used and will share this with the member with responsibility for Education and senior leadership within WCC/WCF.
- 3.2 The one-off funding can be carried forward to 2024/25 to allow SRMA reviews to be undertaken and identified saving being undertaken in a timely manner.
- 3.3 Local authorities will need to demonstrate transparency in the use of this additional funding with reports to the WSF on its allocations.

### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 WSF to note and discuss.

**Robert Phillips**  
Finance Business Partner  
Worcestershire Children First  
November 2023

## Report to the Worcestershire Schools Forum (WSF) Wraparound provision Schools

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 Purpose of the report

### **2. Background**

2.1 Following the announcement in the Spring Budget 2023, the DfE have now published information about the Wraparound Programme. Detailed information can be found in the National Wraparound Childcare Programme Handbook, published on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

### **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 By 2026, all parents and carers of primary school aged children (Reception – Year 6) who need it will be able to access term time childcare in their local area from 8am – 6pm.
- 3.2 In addition to being available, provision is expected to be affordable, high-quality, and sustainable.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>Mar-23</b>	Wraparound Programme announced
<b>Oct-23</b>	Capacity funding allocations announced
<b>Oct-23</b>	Programme handbook published
<b>Nov-23</b>	MoU to be returned
<b>Dec-23</b>	Capacity funding received
<b>Jan-24</b>	Guidance for schools published
<b>Feb-24</b>	Submit delivery plan (for Capacity Funding)
<b>Mar-24</b>	Supply and Demand mapping to be submitted
<b>May-24</b>	Capacity funding received
<b>Jun-24</b>	Submit delivery plan (for Programme Funding)
<b>Jul-24</b>	Programme funding received
<b>Sep-24</b>	Programme launch; additional wraparound childcare places available for parents to access in all areas of the county
<b>Mar-26</b>	Programme funding ends
<b>Sep-26</b>	All children (Reception-YR6) can access affordable, high-quality wraparound provision

- 3.3 Worcestershire will receive funding to increase their capacity to deliver the Wraparound Programme, funding to support schools and settings (including childminders) to set-up new and expand existing provision to meet the requirements of the Programme and, in addition, capital funding to support both the Wraparound Programme and the Entitlements Expansion.
- 3.4 Funding cannot not be used to subsidise the cost of places.

### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 To note and discuss.

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