

**LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM
19 APRIL 2018**

PRESENT: GAVIN BOOTH (CHAIRMAN)

Joanne Noble (Headteacher, Gainsborough Nursery School), Anthony Stevens (Governor, The Holt Primary School, Skellingthorpe), Ian Randall (Head Teacher, Reepham Church of England Primary School), Michele Anderson (Head Teacher, Spalding High School), Professor Ken Durrands CBE (Governor, The King's School, Grantham), Ian Widdows (Head Teacher, Giles Academy, Old Leake), Mark Anderson, Caroline Saxelby (Head Teacher, Walton Girls' High School and Sixth Form), Helen Hilton (Head Teacher, Little Gonerby Church of England Infant School), David Scott (Head Teacher, Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School), Lea Mason (Executive Head Teacher, Lincolnshire Wolds Federation, Louth), Josh Greaves (Chief Operating Officer, Wellspring Academy Trust), Mark Woods (Chief Executive Officer, Stamford Welland Academy) and Helen Stokes (Branch Secretary, UNISON).

Officers in attendance:-

Michelle Andrews (Service Manager Early Years and Childcare Support), Elizabeth Bowes (Strategic Finance Manager, Schools Finance Team), Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Sheridan Dodsworth (Children's Services Manager - responsibility for SEND), Mark Popplewell (Head of Finance (Children's Services)), Heather Sandy (Chief Commissioning Officer for Learning), Tony Warnock (Operations and Financial Advice Manager), Paula Whitehead (Manager, Team Around the Child) and Sue Williams (Children's Services Manager, Education Strategy).

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Marilyn Bell (Governor, The Fenland Federation), Martin J Kyle (Head Teacher, St Faiths & St Martin C E Junior School, Lincoln), Julia Merivale (Early Years Providers), Martin Shelton (Linkage Community Trust), Nigel Sisley JP (Governor, St Francis Community Special School, Lincoln), Bridget Starling (Church of England) and James Todd (Governor, Woodlands Infant and Nursery School, Lincoln).

45 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of members interest made at this stage of proceedings.

**46 MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS'FORUM MEETING HELD
ON 18 JANUARY 2018**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Lincolnshire Schools Forum meeting held on 18 January 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the last bullet point on page 9 being substituted with the wording detailed below:

'No specific sites had been identified as yet. There was going to be one satellite site in each quadrant to start off with. Areas currently being looked at were Sleaford and Skegness due to having no special schools nearby. The impacts on mainstream schools would be looked at in due course.'

47 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was no Chairman's Announcements made at the meeting.

48 ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF THE NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

Consideration was given to a report from Elizabeth Bowes, Strategic Finance Manager, Schools Finance Team, which provided the Forum with an analysis of the impact of the implementation of the national funding formula (NFF) for primary and secondary maintained schools and academies in 2018/19.

The Forum was advised that the Local Authority (LA) had on 23 January 2018, submitted the DfE's Authority Proforma Tool for mainstream schools for 2018/19, using October 2017 pupil census data. It was noted that the DfE had approved Lincolnshire's 2018/19 funding formula in accordance with the DfE's Finance Regulations on 8 February 2018. It was noted further that budgets for both primary and secondary schools had been published on 28 February 2018.

Analysis of the impact of the implementation of the NFF was detailed on the top of page 12 of the report, and Tables A to D provided the following analysis:-

- Tables A and B – detailed the impact of the NFF for the primary and secondary sector (respectively) based on a 0% Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG), 0.5% funding floor, the maximum of either 3% ceiling cap or 20% of their remaining gains, and minimum funding levels. It was highlighted that Tables A and B detailed the impact of the NFF that was implemented for Lincolnshire schools in 2018/19; and
- Tables C and D – detailed the impact of the NFF for the primary and secondary sector if hypothetically the NFF was implemented in full with no ceiling cap and MFG. The Forum noted that the variations in funding levels across the country had inevitably resulted in winners and losers as a result of the formula. It was highlighted that to protect schools from significant budget reductions, the MFG ensured that no school lost more than a certain percentage per pupil compared to its previous years per pupil budget.

In conclusion, the Forum was advised that the introduction of the NFF had been positive for the majority of Lincolnshire schools.

The report also highlighted that the LA was also contributing to the DfE's work on the introduction of a formulaic factor for mobility and growth.

During discussion, it was highlighted that smaller schools were more vulnerable, as a result of a large proportion of funding being directed through pupil led factors. Officers confirmed that rurality was a big challenge for Lincolnshire, but overall, it was highlighted that Lincolnshire schools had gained by c.£14m overall, as a result the implementation of the NFF.

RESOLVED

That the report on the analysis of the impact of the National Funding Formula be noted.

49 ANNUAL REPORT ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

Consideration was given to a report from Sheridan Dodsworth, Children's Services Manager, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, which provided the Forum with an annual update on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, as required by the Schools Forum Regulations.

The report provided the Forum with an update on activity within the county; an overview of the high needs costs throughout 2017/18; an update on the SEND Strategy Review; and an introduction to the SEND Tribunal Single Route of Redress.

In guiding the Forum through the report, the Children's Services Manager, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities made reference to:

- The National Context – It was highlighted nationally that 14.4% of pupils with in receipt of some form of provision with SEND compared to Lincolnshire's percentage of 15.9% of the total pupil population;
- The context in Lincolnshire – The report highlighted that in January 2018, there had been a 16% increase in the number of young people with a statement of EHC Plan from January 2017, and a 38% increase overall since the implementation of the SEND reforms in September 2014, when there had been 3,300 Statements of SEN. It was highlighted that there were now 4,560 children and young people with EHC plans. Further information relating to the Lincolnshire position were shown on pages 19 and 20 of the report presented;
- It was highlighted that SEND remained more prevalent in boys than girls. In Lincolnshire 16.3% of boys were on SEN support, compared to 9.7% of girls;
- The Forum was advised that Lincolnshire was consistent with the national trend of Moderate Learning Difficulties as the most commonly identified primary need overall. It was highlighted that Lincolnshire's Autistic Spectrum Disorder was now also the most commonly identified primary need for pupil's with an EHC plan. Information relating to the number of pupils with SEN support or a statement/EHC plan by District was shown on page 22 of the report;

- Schools' Funding for pupils with SEND – It was reported that schools and academies continued to have through its delegated budget shares, a notional SEN funding allocation and that they were expected to contribute the first £6,000 towards a pupil who required SEN Support/Graduated Approach. It was highlighted that higher level needs (top up funding) and targeted support provision remained outside of this notional SEN funding and that this was funded through the High Needs budget of the Dedicated Schools Grant. A table on page 23 provided the Forum with information relating to High Needs Funding. It was highlighted further that there continued to be a material growth in high needs costs being allocated to mainstream schools through top up and targeted funding; and that the latter was being reviewed as a result of the national funding formula being implemented;
- Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments – It was reported that in 2017 the Special Educational Needs and Disability Service had received 695 requests for assessments. This figure had increased by 15% from 2016. It was reported that the SEND Service issued 95% of new EHC plans within the statutory timescale of 20 weeks. It was reported further that in 2017, the service had made a decision not to undertake a statutory assessment under S36 of the Children and Families Act 2014 in 27% of cases referred (187). It was highlighted that the England average for 'refusal to assess' decisions was around 28%. The Forum was advised that Lincolnshire was 1% below the national average. The Forum was advised further that in 2017 the most common reason for refusal to assess continued to be the lack of evidence;
- Appeals to First Tier Tribunals – It was reported that in Lincolnshire there had been a significant rise in the number of appeals lodged with the SEND Tribunal from the first year of the SEND reforms in 2014/15. The Forum was advised that in the academic year 2016/17, 45 appeals had been lodged with the First Tier Tribunal; and that this was a reduction, and equated to 4.25% per 10,000 school population. The Forum was advised further that evidence for this academic year had indicated that far more cases were being resolved through case management. In the first four months of 2017/18 academic year, 16 appeals had been lodged. It was highlighted the service had been greatly assisted by the partnership working with the Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum;
- Special Schools – It was reported that following a comprehensive review of Special Schools' pupil banding, the Local Authority had worked with Special School Leaders to review the Special Schools' funding formula with changes taking effect from April 2018 for 2018/19 following Executive Councillor approval. It was noted that Special Schools funding had risen by £1.954m from 2017/18 to £27.731m as a result of the special schools funding formula agreed changes and place number review;
- Hospital Schools – It was noted that Lincolnshire had two hospital schools and that the Local Authority had commissioned 13 and 70 places retrospectively in 2017/18. It was noted further that the authority would commission the same number of placements for 2018/19;
- Out of County Placements – It was highlighted that Out of County placements were only made when Lincolnshire schools had stated that they could not meet the special educational needs of a particular learner, or when all schools were full. It was highlighted further that Out of County placements had reduced

over the last three years, at one point there had been 98 pupils in out of county provision, and that now there were 88. The Forum however noted that costs had significantly risen, and for 2017/18, latest information was forecasting a provisional figure of £8.048m;

- Independent School placement in Lincolnshire – It was highlighted that in addition to Out of County placements there were currently 42 children and young people placed in independent schools in Lincolnshire; and
- Reference was also made to the Building Communities of Specialist Provision: A Collaborative Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Lincolnshire. The Forum was advised that this had been a collaborative process over the last two years and that the strategy had gone to public consultation for nine weeks from 8 January 2018 to 14 March 2018.

In conclusion, the Forum was advised that there was an increasing number of young people aged 0 – 25 who required a higher level of support with their additional needs, which was an associated cost pressure for the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. It was highlighted that it was hoped that the proposed Strategy for Special Schools in Lincolnshire would address the capacity issues; and the inequality faced by young people with additional needs who currently travelled great distances within the county.

During discussion, the Forum raised the following issues:-

- The time period for parents when an EHC plan, was refused. The Forum was advised that a further representation was able to be made every six months;
- The need for the Local Authority to manage the High Needs pressures. The Forum was advised that lobbying was taking place nationally regarding this matter due to the pressures being flagged by many Local Authorities;
- The implications for providing mediation – It was reported that this had been a challenge as more staff had been employed; but it was highlighted that rewards were being seen as staff had grown in confidence. It was felt that it had been the right thing to do for the family and for everyone involved in the process;
- The Forum was advised that the number of Electively Home Educated SEN pupils had reduced by 1 over the last year. It was noted that there was also young people receiving home tuition, which was different and was short-term. Parents of home tutored SEN pupils were happy with their arrangements; but it was highlighted that these pupils would be in special schools if there had been enough places; and
- Further information was requested regarding those cases not assessed.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Report on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) be noted.

The Forum received a report from Michelle Andrews, Children's Services Manager, Early Years, which provided the Forum with the Annual Report for Early Years and information on the delivery and performance of Early Years and Childcare across Lincolnshire.

In guiding the Forum through the report the Children's Services Manager, Early Years, reference was made to:

- The six key areas of responsibility for Early Years and Childcare Support;
- The Early Years Entitlements for 2, 3 & 4 year olds. The Forum was advised that all three and four year olds were entitled to 15 hours a week of free early learning. It was reported that take up for this entitlement was currently at 95% nationally and 97% in Lincolnshire;
- Two Year Old Early Education Entitlement – It was highlighted that Lincolnshire had seen a decrease in the number of children potentially eligible based on lists produced by the Department of Work and Pensions. In Lincolnshire as at January 2018, the take up had been was at 72.5% with 1,925 children accessing a funded place. The take up nationally was 71%. The Forum was advised that there were currently 571 providers registered to deliver two year old places in Lincolnshire and these consisted of 28 schools and 261 childminders;
- Early Years Pupil Premium – It was reported that Early Years Premium was additional funding for Providers to improve the education they provided for disadvantaged three and four year olds. It was highlighted that providers could receive up to £302 a year for each eligible child, which equated to an hourly rate of 53p per child per hour;
- Disability Access Funding – The Forum was advised that for 2017/18 a total of 111 children had qualified for disability access funding in Lincolnshire. The Local Authority continued to encourage Providers to seek parent's permission to check eligibility for this additional funding to maximise take-up;
- 30 Hours Entitlement – The Forum were reminded that from September 2017 the extended entitlement to 30 hours free provision had been introduced, an additional 15 hours a week for working parents of three and four year olds. It was reported that the spring term 2018, 4,671 eligibility codes had been issued to children in Lincolnshire. It was highlighted that currently 83% of childcare providers in Lincolnshire were offering the extended 30 hours entitlement. It was highlighted further that Lincolnshire had submitted six capital bids to the DfE for a combination of new builds, premises extensions and refurbishment projects to help build capacity to meet the demand. The Forum was advised that these projects had yielded £1,594,138 of capital funding and as a result would create 259 new 30 hour places across the county;
- Childcare Sufficiency – The Forum was advised that Providers had been supported to review their capacity to meet the 30 hours demand. There continued to be a significant increase in the number of newly registered Providers opening up around the county each year. In addition to this there had also been an increase in the number of schools introducing Early Years Provision;

- Quality Provision/Educational Outcomes (EYFS) – The Forum was advised that the Early Years Foundation Stage Profiles for 2017 had shown that 69.6% of children in Lincolnshire had achieved a Good Level of Development 0.9% lower than the national average of 70.5%. Further details relating to the EYFS were shown on pages 40/41 of the report;
- Quality of Providers Judged by Ofsted – It was reported that 95% of Early Years and Childcare providers in Lincolnshire had achieved a Good or Outstanding Judgement 2% higher than the national average;
- Workforce and Professional Development – The Forum was advised that the EYCC continued to support the development of the early years & childcare workforce across Lincolnshire. Details of the training and development opportunities for the sector were shown on pages 42/43 of the report;
- Inclusion and Early Intervention – It was noted that inclusion support was now embedded with the Early Years Locality Teams; and that the Early Years Inclusion Fund continued to enable early year's providers to enhance support for children with SEND. The Forum was advised that information relating to the pilot process for Inclusion Funding being carried out in Lincolnshire would be the subject of a future report for the Forum's consideration;
- Partnership Working – The report highlighted that EYCC was committed to working in partnership with locality teams and other agencies across Lincolnshire to raise educational outcomes for young children; and
- EYCC Priorities for 2018/19 – The Forum were asked to support the 2018/19 priorities; and core business proposals as detailed on page 47 of the report.

RESOLVED

1. That the Annual Report for Early Years be noted.
2. That the priorities for Early Years and Childcare for 2018/19 as detailed on page 47 of the report be received.

51 TEAM AROUND THE CHILD (TAC)

Consideration was given to a report from Paula Whitehead, Team Manager, Team Around the Child (TAC), Young Carers and Troubled Families, which provided the Forum with an update on Team Around the Child in Lincolnshire.

It was reported that as at 31 March 2018, there were 2,047 TACs open across the county, of these 879 were led by primary schools, and 473 by secondary schools and 106 by Special Schools.

It was highlighted that positive responses had been received on the services provided by the TAC Team. It was highlighted that the most significant development within the last year had been the increased use of the Signs of Safety methodology within TAC; and this had increased the effectiveness of TACs.

Details of the priorities for the coming year were shown in the report represented.

The Committee were asked if they wished to receive ongoing direct reports, or just the detailed Annual Reports for information.

RESOLVED

1. That the Team Around the Child report presented be noted.
2. That the Team Around the Child Annual Report be received by the Forum for information only going forward.

52 ACADEMIES AND TRUST UPDATE

The Head of Finance, Children's Services presented the Academies and Trust update report, which provided information on the latest number of academies, pupils in academies and academy trusts.

It was highlighted that since the effective date of the last report (1 December 2017), there had been four academy conversions of primary schools, which brought the total number of primary academies to 87 (31.1%) and the total number of pupils attending primary academies to 23,289 (40.6%).

It was reported that the total number of academies was now 154 (42.5%) educating 67,504 pupils (63.9%). Information relating to the projected six month status of all Lincolnshire State Schools was provided within the report presented.

The report also provided a list of the academy trusts that currently had the greatest number of academies in Lincolnshire.

RESOLVED

That the Academies and Trust Update be noted.

53 LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOLS' FORUM WORK PROGRAMME

The Forum gave consideration to its work programme.

RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be noted.

The meeting closed at 2.20 pm