

# AGENDA



## SCHOOLS FORUM

Date: Thursday 1 December 2022  
Time: 4.30pm  
Place: Microsoft Teams

### Distribution

#### Members of the Committee

Pippa Osborne (Chair)	Dave Baker (Vice Chair)
Julia Anwar	Ross Newman
Jo Dent	Diane Owen
Stuart Evans	Lisa Parker
Kim Garland	Will Roberts
Clare Haughton	Fr. Malcolm Strange
Aaron Jefferies	Andy Watson
David Jenkins	Susie Weaver
Nicola Jones	Bernice Webber
Louise Leader	David Williams
Kirby Littlewood	Louisa Wilson
Steve Moir	

#### **Appropriate Officers attending:**

Mustafa Salih  
Hilary Smith  
Caroline Warren

#### **Councillors attending:**

Erica Williams  
Trevor Jones

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# AGENDA

- 1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
- 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Pippa Osborne)
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Pippa Osborne)
- 4 SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP (Mustafa Salih)
- 5 ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT (Pippa Osborne)
- 6 MINUTES FROM 3 NOVEMBER MEETING (Pippa Osborne)
- 7 INTEGRA UPDATE (Kevin Ford) – to follow
- 8 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT MONITORING AND BROKERING GRANT (Hilary Smith) – to follow
- 9 Q1 DSG REPORT (Caroline Warren)
- 10 SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN
- 11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**South Gloucestershire Schools Forum  
Minutes of Meeting held on  
Thursday 3 November 2022  
Microsoft Teams**

**PRESENT:**

Pippa Osborne (Chair)	Headteacher Christ Church Junior School
Dave Baker (Vice Chair)	CEO, Olympus Academy Trust
Julia Anwar	Head of Business Operations, Olympus Academy Trust
Kim Garland	Headteacher, Brimsham Green School
Aaron Jefferies	Primary Governor, Coniston Primary School
David Jenkins	Governor, Crossways Schools
Nicola Jones	Representative Special Academies
Louise Leader	Headteacher, Pathways Learning Centre
Steve Moir	Headteacher, Bradley Stoke School
Ross Newman	Early Years Schools Forum Representative
Diane Owen	Chair, King's Oak Academy
Lisa Parker	Headteacher, Warmley Park School
Will Roberts	CEO, Castle School Education Trust (CSET)
Fr. Malcolm Strange	Diocese of Bristol Representative
Louisa Wilson	Headteacher, St. Stephens C of E Junior School

**Executive Members:**

Erica Williams, Cabinet Member - Schools, Skills & Employment

**Officers:**

Mustafa Salih, Head of Financial Management and Business Support  
Hilary Smith, Head of Education, Learning and Skills  
Michelle Palmer, Senior Finance Officer  
Maxine Winter, Integra, Interim Lead School Support

**Others:**

Tamsin Moreton, Director of Finance & Operations, Enable Trust (Observer)  
Patrick Grant, Education, Skills & Funding Agency (ESFA), (Observer)

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Attendees were welcomed by the Vice Chair.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Trevor Jones, Chris Sivers, Jo Dent, Stuart Evans, Claire Hill, Andy Watson, David Williams, Susie Weaver, Kirby Littlewood, Bernice Webber, Erica Williams.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None****4. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP – Mustafa Salih**

## 5. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE VICE-CHAIR DECIDES ARE URGENT (Dave Baker)

None

## 6. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022

### Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for Special Schools

1<sup>st</sup> para: comolexity (should read **complexity**).

2<sup>nd</sup> para: 7<sup>th</sup> November (should read **3<sup>rd</sup> November**)

Remainder of the Minutes recorded as accurate.

## 7. Implementation of New Banding and Top Up Arrangement for Special Schools and Alternative Provision (Mustafa Salih)

Purpose of the report is to consult the Schools Forum on the adoption of a new comprehensive, universal SEND banding model and Top-Up Funding (TuF) arrangements from 1 April 2023 for all Special Schools.

Mustafa shared a document on screen.

The paper forms part of our formal consultation with the Schools Forum before we make changes and set funding rates for Special Schools and we are asking for a formal recommendation that we go forward with these proposals. That recommendation of the Schools Forum will feed into a Cabinet Member Decision on whether to implement these proposals on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

**Pippa Osborne (PO):** Thank you for a very thorough paper in terms of the Special Schools proposals.

**Dave Baker (DB):** What the affordability and the implications for Special Schools and what does that actually mean and is it going to work?

**Lisa Parker (LP):** Clarity of what the implications are where explained to Special Schools and all the Special Schools are in support of the proposals. At Schools Forum we can review it each year along with the mainstream schools proposals as well.

**Mustafa Salih (MS):** I think for mainstream schools the Supplementary Grant is separate to budget shares this year but for next year it will be added into their budget share and I think for Special Schools we would want to take that approach as well but we wouldn't have any problem showing separately what the Special Schools supplementary grant would be.

**DB:** The funding position for Special Schools and the way mainstream schools are funded are quite different and treating each sector the same wouldn't be treating them

fairly and equally – I think it's my view that both sectors are being treated fairly and consistently with these proposals and the contribution both sectors are making is comparable and fair in terms of that drive towards efficiency.

**Nicki Jones (NJ):** How will the implementation of these changes be monitored and reviewed? Can a formal report be made to Schools Forum from the special/AP heads once the effects are better known?

**MS:** Yes, we have agreed that this can be reviewed every year and as part of that review we will be happy to capture from the Special Schools the broader school pressures that are happening as well.

**PO:** Is there anything else to be aware of regarding the risk assessment factors?

**MS:** Underline the fact these changes are aimed at getting to a balanced budget meeting the Safety Valve agreement and we all need to continue working together to stay on track.

**Recommendation:**

a) approve the new banding and top-up arrangements as set out in this report for Special Schools settings shown in paragraph 46 of this Report. **APPROVED**

b) approve implementation of transitional protection outlined in this report to minimise financial turbulence for schools as they transition to the new bandings and top-up arrangements. **APPROVED**

**PO:** Both of these have been approved and minuted and will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Forum. The Forum wanted to thank you and the team for the work on this and that the Special Schools and Alternative Provision Heads have recognised the time you have given them.

**8. High Needs Working Group (HNWG) Update (Susie Weaver – unable to attend)**

**PO:** Going over the background and the different themes where we were proposing more of a permanence on the SEND clusters. We agreed we would proceed with a business case about the SEND clusters to move from a pilot to a permanent scheme but that would need agreement for the £2.2m to fund that.

**Julia Anwar (JA):** What will be the implications for transferring the £2.2m once the schools budget moved to a hard formula? What might we do if that situation arises?

**MS:** We do not know. When the DfE consulted on the hard formula in the consultation they were still talking about having the ability to still transfer funding. There was not any detail how that would work. If we cannot make a transfer because of a hard formula, we would need to go back to the DfE to negotiate the recovery period so that we have a longer number of years to get to a balanced place.

**LL:** The funding model for the PRU/AP sector has still to be agreed and the next phase is to resolve that with MS.

**MS:** On the permanency of the clusters - If we deliver all the changes we are working on we would save enough funds to continue the clusters by achieving sufficient savings in all other high needs areas.

**Ross Newman (RN):** Will all headteachers and teachers be consulted on whether they want the clusters to continue?

**MS:** The correct process is consulting the Schools Forum. Every member of the forum represents their sector and subject to the forum's views, we could write to all schools to feedback to their representative on the Schools Forum.

## 9. Schools Forum Self-Assessment Checklist (Mustafa Salih)

We are meeting all our statutory requirements for membership, publication of minutes, communication between members of the Schools Forum and their sector.

**Kim Garland (KG):** Would it be helpful to have an agreed mechanism that we sought views on items before we came to Schools Forum to ensure that there is ongoing consultative approach?

**DB:** Very useful reminder for us all that we are only elected by the groups we represent and all of us are representing a particular sector and we need to consult and plan for agenda items.

**They have been reviewed by all and all agreed.**

**PO:** With the upcoming possibility of the business case that the HNWG will potentially move towards permanency with clusters, it must be noted how headteachers can feed their views into the Forum.

## 10. Cost Pressures and Budget Planning (Mustafa Salih)

**MS** sent a copy of a letter to SF members from the F40 to the Prime Minister setting out some of the areas of pressures schools are facing and asking that those pressures are considered when funding announcements are made.

Locally I am also working with our Integra colleagues who support a lot of maintained schools with their budgets and through the annual budget setting process and work with those maintained schools to get a sense of what the cost pressures are for schools.

Also, the F40 have contacted LAs asking if there are any schools who would be willing to put themselves forward as case studies to specify what those funding shortfalls are, so if there are any schools willing to put themselves forward to let me know and I can send a letter to all schools. It would involve a little bit of detailed work.

The Council doesn't get involved with the Academies budgets so a question arises on and whether we want to get some intelligence from them on what their financial situation looks like.

**PO:** we should get a holistic picture including our academies on what costs they are facing.

**WR:** Happy for any of our schools to take part in a case study.

**JA:** Where are we at with the DSG work on consulting in November?

**MS:** This will come to the next forum with the schools settlement.

**KG:** Is there an understanding at the LA that this process is going to be managed differently?

**MS:** Partly why I want to do this exercise is to understand the size of the problem. We are not allowed to let schools have unbalanced budget positions except over a fixed period but we could certainly look at extending that period from 3 to 5 years.

**Action:**

**MS to write to Academies asking if they would be willing to send their costs and the impact they are facing on their budget position and what it looks like across all sectors.**

## 11. SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN

Dec 2022	1st			
		7	Integra Update	Kevin Ford
		8	Education Services Grant	Hilary Smith
		9	Q1 DSG Report	Caroline Warren

Jan 2023	19th			
			Business Case for £2.2m Transfer	
		7	Setting the Schools Budget 2023/24	Mustafa Salih
		8	Growth funding policy and update on the DSG based on the quarterly monitor	Caroline Warren

Meeting closed



**INTEGRA UPDATE – paper to follow.**

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT MONITORING AND BROKERING GRANT – paper to follow

# South Gloucestershire Council

## SCHOOLS FORUM

1<sup>st</sup> December 2022

### Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23 Quarter 1

#### Purpose of Report

1. To update Schools Forum on the Dedicated Schools Grant and Safety Valve position as at Quarter 1 2022/23.

#### Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funded budgets

2. The net DSG budget excluding academies and High Needs recoupment, is £150,462k. The DSG is forecasting an outturn overspend position of £25,907k. This arises from a forecast in-year overspend of £8,109k, a forecast Safety Valve payment relating to the DSG recovery plan (£3,000k), a council contribution from the Financial Risks reserve relating the Safety Valve agreement (£334k) and a brought forward deficit balance of £21,132k.

3. Details of the original DSG funding announcement (December 2021) including recoupment and other funding adjustments (March 2022) are provided in the table 1 below.

#### Table 1 – DSG Funding Announcement

DSG Budget	Net £'000
<b>Original Budget Allocation (December 2021)</b>	<b>249,842</b>
Adjustments and Recoupment	
• High needs Block Direct Funding By EFA	-6,116
• Academy Recoupment	-91,022
• Deduction for ESFA Payments relating to Business Rates	-2,551
• Central Schools Services Block Historical Commitments	309
<b>Total Revised DSG (March 2022)</b>	<b>150,462</b>

4. The DSG funding comes from four funding block, the Schools Block, the Central Schools Services Block, the High Needs Block and the Early Years Block.
5. The overspend position by each funding block is provided in table 2 below and the key changes and risks in the subsequent paragraphs.

**Table 2 – Funding position by Blocks**

Funding by Blocks	Gross Budget	EFA / Other Income Budget	Budget Reserve (Approved Q1)	Net Budget (DSG)	Gross Exp	EFA / Other Income	Q1 Reserve	Net Exp	Over / (Under)
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
<b>Schools Block:</b>									
<b>Total Schools Block - Primary &amp; Secondary Schools (excluding Academies)</b>	<b>105,800</b>	<b>-15,852</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89,948</b>	<b>105,830</b>	<b>-15,882</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89,948</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Central Schools Services Block:</b>									
<b>Total Central Schools Services Block</b>	<b>3,343</b>	<b>-121</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,222</b>	<b>3,347</b>	<b>-125</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,222</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>High Needs Block:</b>									
Schools & Independent Providers (including Academies)	42,467	-99	-5,445	36,923	51,666	-6,730	-8,013	36,923	0
Central Items	2,565	-457		2,108	2,694	-490	-96	2,108	0
<b>Total High Needs Block</b>	<b>45,032</b>	<b>-556</b>	<b>-5,445</b>	<b>39,031</b>	<b>54,360</b>	<b>-7,220</b>	<b>-8,109</b>	<b>39,031</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Early Years Block:</b>									
Private, Voluntary & Independent Providers	17,394	0	0	17,394	17,841	-447	0	17,394	0
Central Items	935	-68	0	867	935	-68	0	867	0
<b>Total Early Years Block</b>	<b>18,329</b>	<b>-68</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18,261</b>	<b>18,776</b>	<b>-515</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18,261</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total In-Year DSG &amp; EFA Funding</b>	<b>172,504</b>	<b>-16,597</b>	<b>-5,445</b>	<b>150,462</b>	<b>182,313</b>	<b>-23,742</b>	<b>-8,109</b>	<b>150,462</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total DSG In Year Overspend</b>									<b>-8,109</b>
<b>DSG Deficit Reserve B/F</b>									<b>-21,132</b>
<b>DSG Safety Valve Agreement 2022-2023</b>									<b>3,000</b>
<b>DSG Safety Valve Council Contribution from Financial Risks Reserve</b>									<b>334</b>
<b>Total DSG Deficit Reserve</b>									<b>-25,907</b>
<b>DSG Reserve:</b>									<b>£'000s</b>
DSG Deficit Reserve B/F from previous years (Appendix 7 - Unusable Reserve)									<b>-21,132</b>
Approved Budget 2022/23									<b>-5,445</b>
DSG Safety Valve Agreement 2022-2023 - Forecast									<b>3,000</b>
DSG Safety Valve Council Contribution from Financial Risks Reserve									<b>334</b>
Request increase draw on DSG Reserve at Quarter 1 (£2,664k)									<b>-2,664</b>
<b>Total DSG Deficit Reserve (Appendix 7 - Unusable Reserve)</b>									<b>-25,907</b>

## Schools Block

6. The Schools Block is forecasting a breakeven position.

## Central Schools Services Block

7. The Central Schools Services Block is forecasting a breakeven position.

## High Needs Block

8. The High Needs Block is forecasting a £8,109k overspend position for Quarter 1 before applying the £3,000k forecast DSG safety valve payment and £334k council contribution. The current forecast suggests demand and price pressures within High Needs areas are likely to continue resulting in increased overspends within the key demand led areas. This increases the risk of not being able to continue to meet the original targets

assumed in the Safety Valve agreement, but this is being closely monitored and mitigations are planned to reduce the risk. The welcome news is that the council's Quarter 1 submission to the DfE on progress achieved against the Safety Valve was approved, which evidences good progress thus far.

9. The main areas where the forecasts are showing an increased pressure for Quarter 1 of £100k or more compared to the Safety Valve return, relate to demand and/or price increases within the areas summarised below and supported by the changes in demand and price illustrated in Table 3.

10. South Gloucestershire Special Schools and Placements made to Pathways Learning Centre (PLC) are showing an additional pressure of £1,372k, due to an increase in the average cost of placements, an increase in demand numbers and a delay in implementing the new banding system. The new banding system was originally planned for September 2022, however this has been delayed to April 2023 as agreed with Schools Forum.

11. Resource Bases is showing an additional pressure of £250k. This is due to a forecast increase in demand of 6 placements compared to the budget build, which is partially off-set by the average weekly price reducing from £533 to £515. The forecast outturn includes the introduction of the new banding rates from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 and transitional protection for September 2022 to March 2023.

12. Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools is showing an additional pressure of £154k due to a forecast increase in demand of 4 placements compared to the budget build. The forecast outturn assumes that the savings target of £414k will be achieved in this area.

13. Statemented Support is showing an additional pressure of £931k, due to an increase in the average weekly price to £266 compared to the safety valve figure of £233. This is partly offset against a forecast reduction of 33 placements compared to the budget build.

14. The Quarter 1 figures include a contingency provision for new placements based on named placements and unknown placements as well as a provision for possible leavers. When the September transfers and leavers are confirmed, an update on the financial forecast based on the actual impact of the changes will be reported to Schools Forum.

**Table 3 – High Needs Demand and Price**

High Needs Pressure areas	Outturn 2020/21	Outturn 2021/22	Quarter 1 2022/23
Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools - Placements No.s	111	107	129
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£1,647	£1,710	£1,670
Statemented Support Provision including SG Pupils in OLA Schools No.	840	888	970
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£257	£273	£266
Post 16 - FE Independent Specialist Placements	33	27	41
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£1,007	£1,184	£966
Post 16 - FE Colleges	257	360	356
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£184	£167	£179
Post 16 Alternative Provision	48	53	75
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£315	£378	£410
Post 16 - Total Placements	338	440	472
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£282	£255	£284
Education other than at School SENHN No.s	20	7	12 *
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£382	£681	£585
Other Alternative Provision SENAP No.s		35	38 *
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)		£247	£379
OLA Special Schools No.s	79	88	104
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£476	£563	£571
Early Years High Needs Support No.s (EHCPs only)	36	35	27
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£133	£175	£168
Special Schools No.s	483	492	520
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£521	£561	£578
Resource Bases No.s	142	139	149
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£520	£570	£515
PLC No.s	150	169	170
Average Weekly Price (38 wks)	£646	£600	£542

\* during 2021/22 Alternative provision costs for Children in School monitored separately.

## Early Years Block

15. The Early Years Block is forecasting a breakeven position.

## DSG Recovery Performance

16. As reported in the Outturn 2021/22 report to Schools Forum, South Gloucestershire Council entered into a Safety Valve Agreement with the Department for Education. The agreement was based on the updated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) recovery plan using the Department for Education's (DFE's) Management Tool Template. The recovery plan has been based on the budget pressures identified as part of the budget build for 2021/22 to 2025/26, a £2,200k funding transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and the revised savings targets based on the High Needs Working Groups latest DSG recovery programme.
17. As part of the agreement, the Department for Education will support the council over the next 6 years to help clear the historical deficit. The first payment of £10,500k was received on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and future instalments will be received following the submission of quarterly progress reports.
18. The first quarter progress report for 2022/23 was submitted in June 2022 and approved by the Department for Education. Based on this approval the first instalment for 2022/2023 has been received of £750k, which is a quarter of the £3,000k payment for this financial year.
19. Although the People's Department has been making good progress on implementing changes in line with the Safety Valve agreement, there is a continuing pressure around the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) being requested and an increase in the cost of supporting young people with an EHCP. This continued pressure is a potential risk, which will make the task of continuing to meet the Safety Valve targets extremely challenging.

### Author

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## SCHOOLS FORUM FORWARD PLAN

Jan 2023	19th			
			HNWG Update	Susie Weaver
			Business Case for £2.2m Transfer	Hilary Smith/Mustafa Salih
			Setting the Schools Budget 2023/24 - NFF and Funding Settlement	Mustafa Salih
			School Improvement Grant Decision Paper	Hilary Smith
			Growth funding policy and update on the DSG based on the quarterly monitor	Caroline Warren



**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**