

Schools Forum High Needs Block Sub-Committee

Recommended Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

To provide a structured forum for head teachers and school governors to work in partnership to:

- a. Ensure that High Needs Funding is allocated appropriately to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND—that is, value for money of the High Needs Block.
- b. To offer advice and recommendations to the Schools Forum regarding the use of High Needs Funding (through clear reporting) so that:
 - i. there is ongoing cognisance of issues related to the High Needs Block and
 - ii. Schools Forum members have greater opportunity to take a proactive role in High Needs Budget decision-making.
- c. To review and make recommendations to Schools Forum on directing the allocation of High Needs Funding in relation to:
 - I. Top-up rates, number of places and other specific financial pressures or issues identified by the subcommittee.
 - II. The wider strategic agenda which underpins Bracknell Forest's approach to meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- d. To provide greater transparency of the use of High Needs Funding.

(See Appendix 1)

1. Responsibilities

The High Needs Block Sub-Committee will:

- a. Review and monitor the use of High Needs Funding, including the use of additional payments.
- b. Identify pressures on the High Needs Block.
- c. Develop and undertake a specific work programme (as agreed by Schools Forum) focusing on priority areas and arising issues.
- d. Report a briefing note to Schools Forum which offers an update on progress after each High Needs Sub-committee meeting.

2. Membership

- a. Schools Forum representative members.-This would be open membership, including the Headteacher of Kennel Lane and the Headteacher of the PRU as associate members.
- b. Corporate Finance Team representative.
- c. SEND Service manager representative.

Please note:

- These representatives would each in turn be able to delegate attendance to a representative should they be unable to attend.

- It is open to a Schools Forum to set up working groups of members to discuss specific issues, and to produce draft advice and decisions for the schools forum itself to consider.
- The groups can also include wider representation, for example, an early years reference group can represent all the different types of provider to consider the detail of the early years single funding formula (EFSA guidance)

3. Chair

High Needs Block subcommittee member voted by head teachers and school governors on the Schools Forum.

4. Frequency

The Sub-Committee will meet on a half-termly basis as a minimum and ad hoc as required.

Appendix 1

From Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Guidance:

2. It's open to a Schools Forum to set up working groups of members to discuss specific issues, and to produce draft advice and decisions for the schools forum itself to consider.
3. The groups can also include wider representation, for example, an early years reference group can represent all the different types of provider to consider the detail of the early years single funding formula.
4. The reference group would then be able to give its considered view on the local authority's proposals to the schools forum.
5. The schools forum should not delegate actual decisions or the finalisation of advice to a working group, as this may have the effect of excluding legitimate points of view. These have proved effective for larger local authorities; examples of some working groups are for high needs and early years.¹

¹ *Schools Forum: Operational and Good Practice Guidance*. Educational and Skills Funding Agency. Sept.'18