

# SCHOOLS FORUM

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**WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 6.00 PM  
COMMITTEE ROOM 1, TOWN HALL, JUDD STREET, LONDON WC1H 9JE**

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## **MEMBERS**

**Jen Allan, Jules Belton, Alan Chesters, Rob Earrey, Katy Forsdyke, James Hadley, John Hayes, Perina Holness, Bob House, Deborah Issacs, Nicholas John, Vijita Patel, Colin Reader and Daniel Silverstone**

## **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

**Jemima Wade, Izzy Jones and Alison Lowton**

Issued on: Wednesday 6 September 2023

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**ENDS**

**SCHOOLS FORUM  
13 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**AGENDA**

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

To elect a Chair and Vice-Chair of Schools Forum for the 2023-24 academic year.

**2. SCHOOLS FORUM MEMBERSHIP LIST**

(Pages  
7 - 8)

To note the Schools Forum membership list and any updates.

**3. APOLOGIES**

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

**5. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**6. MINUTES**

(Pages  
9 - 14)

To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2023.

**7. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

(Pages  
15 - 22)

To note the Schools Forum terms of reference.

**8. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

**9. FUNDING UPDATE AND SCHOOLS FUNDING CONSULTATION:  
2024/25**

(Pages  
23 - 72)

This report updates Schools Forum on the national funding position following the latest July 2023 ESFA technical updates and guidance on

schools funding for 2024/25. It provides forum with estimates of the possible impacts on resources up to and beyond 2023/24. It then sets out a draft consultation document for comment by the Forum, seeking the views of schools and other interested parties about any changes to the school funding arrangements for 2024/25.

The report recaps that the schools national funding formula (NFF) was introduced in April 2018 with transitional arrangements whereby local authorities maintain a local funding formula for the distribution of schools and high needs block grants, until 2019/20. It then explains how the updated Education Schools Funding Agency (ESFA) July Guidance for 2023 2024-25 on NFF has now extended this arrangement to 2024/25 and continued its “mirroring” requirement to reduce the difference between individual local formulas and the NFF factors annually by 10%. This now makes 2025/26 the earliest year for the completed national funding formula proposals.

The report also indicates the current budget pressures and the position regarding any possible draw down or addition to Designated Schools Grant (DSG) reserves following the uplifted DSG allocations for 2024/25 announced in July 2023.

The draft consultation section of the report outlines the current and any proposed changes or ESFA statutory requirements to the local Camden funding formula (primary and secondary schools) used for the distribution of the schools DSG block. The recommendation is that there be no changes to the current formula beyond uplifting the local formula factors in line with the general DSG inflation increase for 2024/25 (currently 2.64%) subject to the new ESFA statutory “mirroring” requirements. These ESFA requirements are mainly maximum and minimum factor value requirements introduced to reduce any difference between individual local formula and NFF factors by 10% per year. This approach continues forums earlier aim to wherever possible continue with its current agreed local formula with minimal changes. This is to enable schools to concentrate on dealing with the real terms funding reductions to school budgets (caused by ongoing high levels of inflation and a significant period of below inflation increases to per pupil funding in past years) without introducing new redistributive effects from changes to the local formula at this stage.

The report also explains the timetable leading up to a decision on the funding formula by the authority, which is required prior to the end of October in order to comply with a requirement to inform the government of any changes by 30th November.

**10. SCHOOLS FORUM HIGH NEEDS BLOCK SUB-GROUP: RECOMMENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE** (Pages 73 - 76)

Following discussion at July Schools Forum, this report sets out proposals for the development of a High Needs Block sub-group of the Schools Forum. The purpose would be to allow more in-depth consideration of the use of the HNB in partnership with the local authority, bringing high level recommendations back to the Schools Forum.

**11. SCHOOL MEALS DELIVERY IN SCHOOLS** (Pages 77 - 82)

Report of the Head of Education Commissioning and School Organisation.

Camden Council reported to Schools Forum in February 2023 concerning the development of the School Meals contract.

This paper sets out the Council's current position with regard to the future of school meals delivery and the range of options available to the Council.

**12. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

To note all Schools Forum meeting dates for academic year 2023/24, that will take place at 6.00pm on:

- 13 September 2023
- 1 November 202
- 5 December 2023
- 6 February 2024
- 4 June 2024

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

**AGENDA ENDS**

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday, 1 November 2023 at 6.00 pm in Remote meeting via Microsoft Teams. This meeting can be watched live at [www.camden.gov.uk/webcast](http://www.camden.gov.uk/webcast).