



Minutes of meeting on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at The Campus, Weston-super-Mare

Present

Peter Binding	Foundation Trust Schools
Justin Templer	Diocese of Clifton
Caroline Hostein	VA Catholic Primary Schools
Sally Varley	Local Authority (Planning and Access)
David Gradwell	Community SEN
Jack Dagnall	Governor (Secondary)
Bill McEntee	NSC Admissions Policy Officer (Secretary)
Ann-Marie Heath	NSC Choice Advice
Gary Lewis	Foundation Schools
Eurfron Parry	Methodist Church
Cate Hill	Special Schools
Terri Knowlton	NSC Admissions and Transport Team
Geoff Flynn	NSC Assistant Locality Leader
Theresa Gale	Bath and Wells Diocese (Chair)
Chris Hustwick	Governor Services
Sarah Edwards	NSC for minutes

1. Apologies

Cllr Anne Kemp, Luci Amos, Clair Sepulveda/Ian Bell, Julie Fox, Lynne Packer/Sarah Trigg, Sue Calvert

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2010 were reviewed.

Item 9 In-year Fair Access Protocol

Geoff Flynn flagged up an inaccuracy in the minutes - should read 'In 2009/10 and Term 1 of this year, there was a fair distribution of pupils'. It was agreed that the minutes should be amended to reflect this. **Action BM: Bill to amend minutes and circulate to forum.**

Justin Templer queried a decision taken in July to review the fair access protocol and to hold other meetings to discuss it but to date no meetings had been held. Justin proposed that we need to have a deadline by which this is actioned. Terri explained that she has had difficulty in progressing this due to the unavailability of some people involved in the process but hopes to have something in progress by the end of this week and will update the forum at the next meeting in March.

3. Actions and Matters arising

Item 4 Appendix 3 of the previous meetings minutes - Peter Binding explained that the Weston Secondary Head teachers are not happy with the letter that was sent out to parents as the child's area school was marked in bold type and he felt this gave the impression that

parents had to apply for that school, also that the Headteachers were not consulted on the letter content and not made aware that the letters were going out. Bill explained that the same letter had gone out in previous years and that the letter does advise parents that they can apply for any school, based on 2010 applications there is strong evidence that the vast majority of parents understand that they can apply for a different school to their area school. Ann-Marie commented that in her experience of dealing with parent enquiries parents are aware that they can apply for schools other than their area school. Sally clarified the term of the letter advising legally we have to inform parents what their area school is, also explaining how the Secondary school areas were reviewed and nearest schools calculated.

It was agreed that the letters will be reviewed for next time, consultation with schools and a copy of the letter to go to Heads beforehand with an indication of how many letters will be sent. **Action TK/BM: Terri and Bill to action this.**

Cate Hill reiterated the need for better communication with schools and raised concern that parents with children attending a special school received Secondary transfer letters causing confusion and concern for parents. Terri explained that letters are sent in order to give parents an opportunity and equal choice if they want their child to attend a mainstream school.

To facilitate better communication Sally proposed that she meets with the Weston Secondary Head teachers at their next meeting – **Action PB: Peter to invite Sally along to the next Head teachers meeting.**

4. Discussion on the implications of White Paper “The Importance of Teaching”.

Chapter 5 – the move to have more Academies and Free Schools.

Sally advised that in the near future North Somerset will potentially have two academies. Bristol have a number of ‘Free Schools’ which could have an impact on North Somerset with children living in Bristol attending St Katherine’s and Gordano school, Bristol currently have a 20% surplus of places.

Discussion followed on Bristol Free Schools, indication that 7 are hoping to be opened by September 2011, implications on admissions given that the deadline for secondary transfer applications has passed and outcomes will be communicated on 1 March 2011. Free Schools in 2011 are not part of the admissions process for 2011, therefore implications on numbers, staffing structure, budgets etc if child offered place at a state school and then opt for Free Schools once opened.

Tess updated the forum on a Fair Access Group in London that she attended; advising a ministerial embargo on information going out, that new proposals interwoven with white paper will go out for consultation 1 March 2011, 16 week consultation starts in March and ends in May, proposals to come into force by 2012, there are far reaching implications on admissions – white paper assumptions are that all schools will be either Academy or Free School. Concerns were raised regarding implications on budgets, government withholding money on the assumption that a certain number of schools will convert to Academy etc. It was concluded that by the date of the next Forum meeting there should be a clearer indication of the implications these changes will have and further discussions can take place.

Bill raised Para 4.55 of the White Paper - raising of statutory school age – questioned implications on physical accommodation within schools and transport implications. Gary Lewis commented that the Government appear to be quietly backing away from this, not expanding Post 16 provision in schools, apprenticeships are becoming more prominent.

Discussion moved on to school capacities and the increase in number of pupils across North Somerset due to housing developments - 9,000 new homes proposed across North Somerset. Sally gave an overview of areas in North Somerset where capacity increases will be required, described projections on school places and how we should approach looking at place deficits, discussed increase in size of Trinity to reduce YrR deficit for Portishead. Described S106/tariff system and how this is implemented and working with D & E to allocate funding – working with schools to put in new infrastructure, looking at collaboration/federation etc. Building on partnership with existing schools, LA ethos is for schools/LA to work together.

Jack Dagnall raised for discussion The New School System, page 11 of the White Paper. Tess proposed that we add this item to the agenda for the next meeting. **Action BM: Bill to add item to next meetings agenda**

It was requested that the forum group be notified when the code is out and when consultation period begins. **Action BM: Bill to email forum group**

5. In year Fair Access protocols (standing item)

Permanent Exclusions and Managed Transfers (standing item)

Geoff Flynn presented on the Complex Placements Summary sheet (enclosure 3).

- Changes in admission policy in September 2010 have had no adverse effects on admitting children under the new policy.
- Permanent exclusions have increased this year with 11 before Christmas and so far 2/3 this term which is a concern.
- PRU's are full, limiting how many pupils can be referred to them.
- There has been an increase in the number of Yr10 pupils moving to the area who haven't attended mainstream school.
- We may not be receiving all forms from schools when they take pupils under the In Year Fair Access Protocol so may not be recording all figures.

Cate Hill asked how the protocol works for Special Schools. It was explained that it all goes through SEN and Geoff gave an overview of the Fair Access process and implications. Also explaining the data tables indicating a pupils SEN stage and provided an overview of terms.

The question was raised as to how we address PRU's being full. Geoff explained that this is being addressed by the EOTAS manager, looking at demand vs supply and options available given that it is unlikely more resources will be made available. Gary Lewis commented that the White Paper describes schools being accountable for the outcome of excluded pupils and responsible for providing alternative placements, thus pressure on schools to maintain a low level of permanent exclusions.

David Gradwell referred to the Negotiated Transfer 01/09/10-17/12/10 sheet as it was noted Geoff to update at Admissions Forum meeting – progress update given.

## 6. Review of Coordinated Admission Arrangements 2010-11

Terri Knowlton gave an overview of admission arrangements.

- As of September 2010 all In-Year Co-ordinated arrangements are undertaken by the admissions team.
- Up to the end October'10 600 applications were received, 850 applications received up to Christmas. Over the year it is estimated that admissions will have an additional 900 applications to process compared to the previous year. There are no additional staff to process applications, extra workload is having to be accommodated within existing resources.
- Trying to make the process as efficient as possible – if there are any suggestions/thoughts on process from schools, please forward to Terri.
- Target turn around for applications is a maximum of 19 days, although there are different criteria for VA, Trust, Foundation Schools.
- Expecting an increase in applications again around June/July time for September applications.

Peter Binding queried process for waiting lists – Terri confirmed parents need to renew place at the start of each term and clarified criteria for waiting list.

## 7. Forum Working Party on allocations and ethnicity – update

Bill McEntee advised that there was nothing to report at present – this item will be looked at again as there are a couple more years data to analyse and proposed that this item is put on the agenda for the next meeting. **Action BM: Bill to add item to next meeting's agenda**

## 8. Result of Relevant Area Consultation 2012-14

Bill McEntee advised that every 2 years we review the area of consultation and that the result of the relevant area consultation 2012-14 has been determined as the North Somerset Council boarder area.

Sally indicated that in light of a recent visit to St Katherine's school we may be required to look again at the consultation area. St Katherine's serve Bristol area pupils and therefore we may need to review our consultation to include areas of Bristol. It is to be noted by the forum therefore that the area consultation may change in future.

Discussion followed regarding the areas of Bristol St Katherine's school covers, implications in light of the White Paper and the provision of school places with 'Free Schools' and resulting differences in planning/budgets.

## 9. Admissions Forum Report

Bill McEntee asked the forum if they wanted to produce a report this year. It was explained that the LA already produce a report which covers many issues the forum report would cover.

David Gradwell asked what the positive outcomes of previous reports were. Bill cited ethnicity as being one of the positive outcomes; issues were identified by the report that have been actioned.

Gary Lewis commented that due to limited resources and the new code coming into place, he felt that producing a report would not be a good investment of forum member's time.

Tess advised that if there was a specific issue the forum felt we needed to look into then we would set up a working group.

It was agreed by all not to produce a forum report.

#### 10. Any Other Business

Bill McEntee referred back to the previous meetings minutes, item 6. Draft Admission policies for Foundation and Trust Schools for 2012-13 - LA to check code on the legality of the wording for pg 2, para 2 Churchill School's policy. Bill has checked the code and the wording they use is not contrary to the code and it was recommended that we leave it as is. All agreed.

Sally requested at the next meeting we look at the make up of the forum as an Academy representative will be required as part of the forum group. Under current arrangements up to 20 core members are required on the forum. **Action BM: Bill to add item to next meetings agenda.**

Bill McEntee referred to a letter/questionnaire received from Comprehensive Future, a pressure group in favour of keeping Forum groups running. Bill summarised the questions to the forum members and it was proposed that Tess should respond on behalf of the group. Questionnaire to be returned by 31 January - forum members asked that if they wish to contribute anything to the questionnaire they should respond to Tess before this date.

Bill McEntee proposed a change of venue for the future forum meetings due to the cost of hiring venues such as the Campus. It was proposed March and April's meetings be held at Castlewood, Clevedon. It was noted that a portable hearing loop will be made available and map/directions be sent to forum members. **Action BM: Bill to email Castlewood directions with next meetings agenda.**

Gary Lewis advised that he would be happy to accommodate the July meeting at Gordano School.

All agreed with the venue changes.

#### Next Meetings

17 March 2011	1.00 – 4.00	Castlewood, Clevedon
28 April 2011	1.00 – 4.00	Castlewood, Clevedon
7 July 2011	1.00 – 4.00	Gordano School, Portishead