Venue: Strood Academy, Carnation Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 2SX

Time: 4:00pm to 6:00pm

Agenda

1.   Apologies

2.   Declarations of Interest

3.   Minutes from the previous meeting.

4.   Outstanding Confidential Matters from last Time.

       a. 2 Schools Revenue rollover.

5.   Medway Leadership Development Programme (Nikki Smith and CCCU Rep)

6.   Schools in Financial Difficulty Policy   (Maria Beaney)

7.   2018-19 R1 monitoring forecast.   (Maria Beaney)

8.   2019-20 Budget settling arrangements   (Maria Beaney)

       a. Pupil Number Variation
       b. Provisional 2019-20 SB budget Allocation
       c. School Consultation
       d. Timetable.

9.   Schools Forum Governance   (Maria Beaney)

10.   Forward Plan

11.   Date, time and venue of the next meeting.

WIFI Password:

Venue: Strood Academy, Carnation Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 2SX

Time: 4:00pm to 7:30pm

In Attendance.

David Watkins – DW
Maria Beaney - MB
Rebecca Smith - RS
Paul Clarke - PC
Simon Harrington - SH
Niki Smith – NS

Peter Martin – Chair - PM
Karen White – Vice chair - KW
Kathy Sexton - KS
Karen Norman – Vice chair. KN
Kim Gunn - KM
Steve Geary – SG
Clive Mailing - CM
Karen joy – KJ
Ian Chappel - IC

Clerk : Sarah Phillipson

1.	**Apologies:** Barbara Fincham, Ian Sutherland, Anne Domeney, Fiona McCall and elected members. The meeting was Quorum
2.	**Declarations of Interest:** A declaration was withdrawn by steve Geary. As interest no longer applies due to a change in circumstances. Vice chair Karen white – declared her interest on items 8 and 9 Charmian Peter Martin – declared a special interest declared in item 7.
3.	**Minutes from the previous meeting:** Members were advised by MB that there were no minutes issued from the last meeting due to declaration of interest breach – All details and decisions from this meeting have been withdrawn and will need to be agreed again. However, the rates

funding figures which were agreed has been paid to the schools.

4.   MB advised members as follows.

Outturn Reports:
2017-18 DSG Allocation deferred until October meeting – due to EFSA representive not being available to attend this meeting regarding the late notification of the DSG negative adjustment figures. This issue has been resolved to ensure a neutral balance, however the EFSA wished to explain this to the school forum members. MB summarised to members that the EFSA proposed to cut the high needs budget by £1.5 million, the ESFA/LA have resolved this suggestion, so that there is no long-term effect to school, LA or EFSA. This issue arose due to an incorrect assumption that all 11 resource units had zero commissioned places filled in mainstream special needs units' place.

Q – Will this affect the funding in place currently?
A – For a short term only, it would affect LA cash flow not the actual funding into the schools.

School Reserves.
2017-18 Year End Schools' Revenue and Capital Reserve Balances

Members were advised by MB that at 31 March 2018, there were **32** maintained schools with revenue reserve balances totalling £2.235m; which is a reduction of £0.464m or 17.2% from the previous year. Appendix A shows the level of school reserves for the last three years.

As at 31 March 2018, the capital reserve balances at the end of the 2017-18 financial year were £1.446m; which is an increase of £0.372m from the previous year. Again, appendix A shows the level of school reserves for the last three years.

12 schools converted to academy status during the year and transferred their surplus reserves of £0.689 million with them.

There are **2** schools in deficit, currently £25,642 and £113,900 respectively, and both schools are working closely with the Schools Finance Team to address these deficits or are in a deficit recovery plan.
Additional information is highlighted in appendix B of the reference documents

5 additional schools (excluding those above the max limit) have capital reserves in excess of £50,000.

Members Noted: **7 schools** had higher than permitted revenue reserves totalling £0.112m and **3** have higher capital reserves totalling £0.169m then permitted. These are highlighted in green on appendix A reference document and each school has provided a brief explanation of why they are above the maximum limit in section 3. Members were advised that the Medway Scheme for Financing Schools outlines the maximum carry forward reserves for maintained schools as follows:

- Revenue - 8% of their total yearly grant income (I01, I02, I03, I05 and I08)
- Capital – a school must spend their annual Devolved Formula Capital Funding (DFC) and any brought forward balances within three years.

Q – Where does this money go if we refuse the roll over?
A – The funds will go into the figures for reallocation as part of the 2020-2021 budget build process.

The members discussed each school positions and voted on the individual school permitted revenue reserves.

The members voted on individual schools.

- School 1 – £ 9,813 - Outstanding bill for LA council risk and insurance team (failed to invoice) £11,813 Invoice will be issued 2018/2019 hence the roll over to pay for this bill. – **All Members voted and agreed the school would keep the rollover.**

- School 2 – £518 - **All Members voted and agreed the school would keep the rollover.**

- School 3 - £20,505 - £10k for rates overpayment which will be paid back and £10k roll over for another organisation – **All Members voted and agreed would keep the rollover.**

- School 4 - £26,564. – Holding a 10% contribution to 35k capital project to expand the KS1 class rooms, they are proposing. As VA school they can't contribute to capital. (if they were maintained they could and would not be on this list) **All Members voted and agreed would keep the rollover.**

- School 4 - £21,015 – 1. Refurbishment for a kitchen damage, which is outside of warranty and will need repairing. – Members questioned if this was an insurance issue. 2. Another issue raised was long term staff sickness x 2 need to continue pay them – 3. Supporting growing number of high needs children. **Members agreed they would like the school to present a stronger case than has currently been put forward at next meeting before any agreement could be made.**

- School 4 - £16,287 – No response from the school to present their case. **Members agreed they would like the school to present a stronger case than has currently been put forward at next meeting before any agreement could be made.**

- School 5 – £17,479 – Mini bus contract for the school delayed payment. **All Members voted and agreed would keep the rollover.**

  Capital roll over MB advised there were 3 schools over their permitted revenue. –
- School 1 - £7,138 – activity centre, currently in planning permission. - **All Members voted and agreed would keep the rollover.**

- School 2 - £56,925 – Accounting issue (figure is not correct, there is not a roll over) - **All Members voted and agreed would keep the rollover.**

- School 3 - £105,220 – Allocated to 2 projects started 2017/2018. **All Members voted and agreed would keep the rollover.**

Q - Member asked if capital reserves had been discussed before under the remit of this forum, and if so where it is documented that a maximum capital rollover cap exists?
A – The Medway scheme for Financing schools document and the Medway finance manual. MB to advised that at all previous year end outturn meetings (July) have discussed this subject.

Trade Union –
Details in the reference document attached.

NS referred to agenda Item 4c reference documents.

She explained the time spent by trade union representatives varies from month to month, but the summary below outlines the activities undertaken by trade union representatives during 2017 - 2018. It was noted that in 2017, trade unions looked to review these categories and had constructive feedback and suggestions from TU's, during consultation; but with the new guidance relating to the publishing recording of TU time pending, no changes were made. The guidance has now been published, in June 2018, which has determined the minimum data that needs to be published. There is no requirement to publish the level of detail currently recorded, however from a management perspective, the data is useful for TU's, the council and schools in determining trends and identifying areas where preventative work could be undertaken. The revised categories therefore may now be finalised, with agreement.

It was explained that the Top 3 Service activities were as follows;

47% responsibilities as local officers, including preventative work.

21% meetings with employees relating to individual or group issues with headteachers, managers, and governing bodies.

14% Interviews with or on behalf of union members on matters of discipline, dismissal, redundancy, grievance or other employee relations issues. This area has shown an increase.

Responsibilities as local officers relates to a wide range of activities such as telephone and email communications, seeking early resolution of disputes, preparation and research for casework, TUPE and school reorganisation meetings.

The members noted that the current price sits at £1.09 per pupil. - It was explained to members that as at 31 March 2018, the closing balance on the reserve stood at just under **£5,873 in deficit.**

Members were informed, charges to schools were set at £1.25 per pupil from September 2018 for both academies and maintained schools in order to reduce the possibility of an overspend and to balance the cost of significant training spent on members. The level of reserves has been reducing year on year, and it is anticipated that the budget for 2018/19 will continue to be under pressure. It is recommended that the charges to schools be increased to **£1.40 per pupil from 1 September 2019** to pre-empt budget constraints and ensure continued services to staff across Medway schools. A school with 350 pupils would be paying £490. NS explained that she felt this represents excellent value for money and is lower than neighbouring local authorities. She outlined that this decision will need to be reviewed in July 2019 when the budget out-turn for 2018/19 has been finalised as it is not yet known how many schools will buy the service.

Q – What is going to be the total income that you expect from this increase?
A - That figures hasn't been formulised yet.

A member noted to the forum that schools have had to cut money to manage a balanced budget. Surely the unions should look doing the same. The member commented that 47% of time spent by representatives is spent on general roles, and that there was not enough information outlining what this was and why where members having to come out of schools to take responsibilities as local officer. The member voiced that he was not happy agree to cover this deficit without more clarity.

Union representative explained that the duties carried out by members are outlined in the NUT Burgundy book. Appendix 1.

ACTION – NS – to give details of how the additional money is spent with detailed description explaining how this figure funds particular activities undertaken by reps, by the September meeting.

Q – Will there be an ongoing increase?
A – No, we don't envisage another increase, we are looking to catch up from non-increase over the previous years.

Q – What is the % split between dealing with sickness, grievances and restructuring?
A – Different levels depending on the time of year. For example, from April the majority of time has been spent on sickness absence, prior to that it was restructuring issues. Sickness has increased due to stress.

The chair explained that the forum was being asked to note the proposed increase to £1.40 per pupil for de-delegated services from April 2019 from 1 September 2019 for academies schools. He asked if the forum members agree in principle to this increase. **Members agreed that they did.**

The members raised that the school's and academies leaders should be very clear of what they will give up if they fail to buy into this facility.

	ACTION – At the primary and secondary head meeting explaining the effects of not joining this service for the next meeting. – NS.
5.	**Action Research Evaluation Report** – These items are deferred to September meeting. This item was stopped and deferred to allow members to access the full document to review value for money. **Members agreed this.** **ACTION** – NS - to send link to access the full study to all members.
6.	**Business Case School Improvement** RS – presented to members two reference documents – Joint Bid from Medway school improvement team, MELA & Medway teaching schools to Medway schools forum, and Medway Leadership Development - Action Research Programme RS outlined to the members the details as shown in the attached document. She asked members to note this scheme is about collaboration within all services to improve performances in disadvantaged pupils and narrowing the gap at primary level achieve against national level. This gap is currently at 4 %. She explained that the aim was to put together a 2-year programme that works with the teaching schools, MELA and the school improvement team, to target initially around 25 - 27 schools at Ks2 level. **Q – Is this a something which the schools forum would need to vote upon or noted?** A – This is a request for £300k of funding. The budget sits under the school improvement projects funding and is ring fenced for the schools block and requires discussion and agreement of the schools forum. **Q - Are there are other projects we would need to consider as well for this funding? For example, the AP report recommendations?** A – When we asked for the school improvement team to work with MELA for recommended projects we did not have the outcome of the AP report, so it was not considered, but will need to have funding to achieve the recommendations. **Q – What exactly is going to happen within this project, who is going to be leading it, and who is ultimately accountable? We need more details on.** A - RS – referred to on page 4 of Joint Bid from Medway school improvement team, MELA & Medway teaching schools to Medway school's forum document to explain role of disadvantaged champions. It was explained the resource for this would come by tapping into SLE resources within those areas and teaching schools. Training, support and quality assuring these people to become the disadvantaged champions. It was outlined that the program would be phased as outlined phase one (see page 2 of the Joint bid document) – The aim being to engage leaders in Medway to look at the support for the disadvantaged. Member noted that Medway is already looking an Inclusion project and that there are other factors not necessarily in the class room. Members suggested that a program for supporting Mental Health Agenda and skill bases in schools to support the children with those issues, could also help. It was felt this option might not remove barriers felt by the disadvantaged. RS explained that part of this programme is to look at what is currently available to support these pupils and

what impact they have.

Q - Trade union have seen an increase in restructuring of support staff in schools, can school afford an extra member of staff as described?
A – This proposal would not be charged to the schools.

Q – How much would phase one cost?
A – Approximately £2,500.

Q – Has this research not already been done?
A – A number of schools are not aware of the possible approaches, and so are not using them.

The chair asked the members if they agreed in principle the request for £300k?
The members voted that they wanted more detailed action plan along with other choices.

ACTION – RS to put together a working group to look at the details in this proposal, how it will be done, what is involved and costings, and outcomes. Medway improvement team – 4th October meeting.

ACTION - members would like to see a range of proposals to consider the £300k spend. – 4th October meeting.

| 7. | **Verbal High Needs Funding Update –** |

MB updated members outlining – that LA have gone out to consult regarding special schools alternative provision top of rates. She explained that historically we have had one school getting £2k less money than an equivalent school. LA has been reviewing these rates.

She outlined to the members that one school has been considerably underfunded for many years and the LA have reviewing how to close the gap.

Special interest declared by Peter Chair of Governors of Bradfield's.

Q - How do we top this school up and where do we get this money from?
A – Initially we considered slicing money from one school, but we found that this school was getting the correct funding in comparison to other school's costings. So, we will need to look at recommissioning other services etc.

Q - Are we going to give arrears? Or just focus on getting the correct funding in place by September?
A – No we will not be backdating funding. New fees from September being considered as we will have to reallocate this funding.

Q – Are we looking to reduce the numbers of special needs places across the authority?

A – Not at the moment. We are looking at creating equal banding. There is not a national policy for special schools – banding is different across the piece and it is recognised a need to come in lined with actual costs schools spend.

MB outlined to members that this is a significant issue, which will need to be addressed as a matter of urgently as it affects the most vulnerable children in Medway.

Q - Is the £500k SB ear marked for school improvement or can we give this to the school?
A – This is not a year on year solution and the fund is a development budget.

Members agreed that work should continue on getting funding bands correct and offer a solution to this issue urgently.

| 8. | **Place Planning Presentation**. |

PC updated members referring to the School Planning document. He outlined the below points to be noted.

Focus on Medway Rochester and Chatham place planning areas, 4 years ahead for primary and 6 years ahead for secondary.

Birth rates were discussed showing trends and baselines. Net migration of children moving into Medway after birth was also discussed it was noted that. In last 3 years Rochester has had positive migration and Chatham negative. All births across Medway are generally level since 2012.

A - Where are these children coming from?
Q- Maidstone and north Kent, East London.

Members noted that this document can only include building developments approved for planning.

Q – Given the number of houses planned to be built in Medway in the 5 years, is it correct that these are not yet included?
A – Yes that is correct. Medway has been tasked with building 29k homes and if this happens then 24 forms of entry primary/ 4 secondary would be needed. (in addition to the 2 already outlined as being needed)

The aim is to inform the members of this coming growth. PC noted to the forum current Rochester and Chatham cohort growth. Shows the growth from 703 – 741 over 4 years.

PC referred to current reception spaces spare map. He explained that the current intake spare spaces waiting to be filled (reviewed every 3 weeks) are spread out between 2 – 3 schools, with popular school being full. With the only area being an exception to this trend as Rochester, with 4 schools not full. The full schools are Crest, St Peters, and Warren Wood and Delce Academy. All surrounding schools are full at reception class.

Short term solutions were highlighted as;

- Reduce PANs on a local agreement 2020 and local agreements. (proforma to be produced)
- Reduce PANs on an in-year variation.
- Schools In Financial Difficulty policy is adopted on a case by case basis.

Long term solutions were highlighted as;

- Reduce PANs permanently.
- Look at reorganisation in the area; primaries rather than separate infant and junior schools.
- Academisation.
- Local support network

Q- Is the temporary reducing of PAN too late for coming academic year 2018.
A – No you still can do a local agreement for 2018, the difficulty is if the school is already over the lower level of PAN e.g. reducing from 90 to 60 but the school is currently at 63. We also have to ensure we have spaces for casual admissions.

Chair thanked PC an SH for the presentation.

9. **Schools in Financial Difficulty Policy** –

MB advised members this policy was originally called the Falling roles policy. She explained that the fund figures of £300k was agreed but the policy on spend needed to be agreed. There was requested changes to the policy which have been made with one exception – Funding was set at the falling rolls fund per class at £100K and not as agreed in the last meeting (not minuted etc) at £35k per class.

MB explained that schools need the certainty of a policy and not as one off agreements. KS2 can't increase class sizes above 30 (or multiples of 30) in years R, 1, 2 and 3. She outlined that Crest and Hempstead have each been awarded £35k already as a one off for one year only. The schools will present their cases for the additional sums shortly.

MB then explained that Parkwood, Luton and Gordon have similar issues coming upcoming in the 2019 funding year. However, policy agreement would support them, and set a precedent going forward.

Members raised the concern that this would be financially untenable. It was explained that the funding for this figure comes from the school block of funding – top slicing £300k to create this fund. MB updated members on a meeting with the EFSA who asked the LA why they did not have a falling rolls fund policy to support schools. Kent and Essex current policy is £100k per class.

Members discussed the details of this and the implication of this policy, discussing how the £100k figure was calculated. It was felt if the funding was given then the school must agree to keep the additional class open.

	Members felt that this Policy agreement to be deferred to next meeting in 4th Oct 2018. The members heard the Confidential Issues Business Cases from two schools. School 1 – 2018-19 funding increased to £55,000. School 2 - 2018-19 funding increased to £55,000. Members agree that decisions basis should be on individual business cases.
10.	Forward Plan – AOB – School forum governance adjourned to the September meeting.
11.	Date, time and venue of the next meeting – 11 September 2018, 4 – 6 pm at the Strood Academy

Signed by Chair ……………………………………………………………

Actions for next meeting.

Item NoI.	Action	Responsible.
4 Trade unions	To supply members with details of how the additional trade union price increase money would be spent with detailed description explaining how this figure funds particular activities undertaken by reps, by the September meeting.	NS
4 Trade unions	At the primary and secondary head meeting NS to explain the effects of not taking up this service.	NS
5. Research Evaluation Report –	These items are deferred to September meeting. This item was stopped and deferred to allow members to access the full document to review value for money. NS - to send link to access the full study to all members.	NS
6. Business Case School Improvemen t	RS to put together a working group to look at the details in this proposal, how it will be done, what is involved and costings, and outcomes. Medway improvement team – 4th October meeting.	RS
6.	Members would like to see a range of proposals	RS

Business Case School Improvement	to consider the £300k spend. – 4th October meeting.	

Agenda Item 4:
Outstanding Confidential Matters from the July 2018 meeting.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Medway Scheme for Financing Schools outlines the maximum carry forward reserves for maintained schools as follows:

- Revenue - 8% of their total yearly grant income (I01, I02, I03, I05 and I08)
- Capital – a school must spend their annual Devolved Formula Capital Funding (DFC) and any brought forward balances within three years.

1.2 At their annual July meeting the Schools Forum members discussed and voted on whether to clawback funding form 9 maintained school who roll over was above the maximum allowable limits.

2. School Explanations and commentary.

2.1 At the July 2018 meeting members agreed the rollover for 7 of the 9 schools but invited 2 schools (St Nicholas) and (St Peters) back to clarify why they were over the maximum limits and to explain the impact on their school if this funding was removed.

2.2 The Headteacher from each schools will be present to explain their reserve levels and the impact on their school if they are removed.

3. Action for the Schools Forum

3.1 The Schools Forum are asked to **vote** on whether to enact the revenue clawback for the 2 schools who were over the 2018/19 maximum carry forward limits as per section 2.6 and 3 above?

Report written by:
Maria Beaney
maria.beaney@medway.gov.uk
Finance Business Partner – Children's Services

Agenda Item 5:
Leadership Development Action Research Project Evaluation

1.   Introduction

1.1   A tender for the provision of Action Research Scholarships was agreed by Schools Forum in 2014/15 and the funds were reserved. The successful bid was from Canterbury Christchurch University. The contract start date was delayed due to a review of school improvement priorities in 2014/15 and 2015/16. As these priorities changes the programme was revised in the light of a gap analysis which weighed up the needs of schools, this took place in consultation with Medway's teaching schools and contract variation terms were then finalised with CCU in May 2016.

1.2   The revised programme commenced September 2016 and was due to run to March 2017 with a dissemination event in July 2017. However the programme delivery timeframe was extended at no additional cost by Canterbury Christchurch University to enable participants to fully complete their projects. The programme concluded in December 2017 with a dissemination event which was held on 27th January within the #LearningFirst Conference at the Canterbury campus; around 150 people attended from across Kent and Medway.

1.3   Two cohorts of senior, middle and aspirational leaders focused on developing and honing their leadership skills were recruited to.

1.4   The programme aimed to support:
- aspirational target-setting;
- self-direction and resilience in school leaders;
- transformational leadership;
- accountability and autonomy of schools;
- networks of community learning and self-improving school-led systems;
- world class leadership development.

2.   Evaluation and Outcomes

2.1   An external evaluation was required as part of the contractual terms and this took place late Autumn 2017. This is attached at Appendix 1.

2.2   The programme participants also had their projects published in an Action Research Report entitled "Leading Success In Medway" this was published in two parts.

http://beyondlevels.website/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/leading-success-in-medway-part-1.pdf

http://beyondlevels.website/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/leading-success-in-medway-part-2.pdf

3.   Recommendation

3.1   Schools Forum are asked to note the content of the external evaluation report and discuss the Observations, Conclusions and Recommendations at section 5.

Medway Leadership Development - Action Research Programme

Delivered in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University

EVALUATION REPORT

November 2017

Inspiring Leaders Worldwide

Contents

1. Background

The genesis of the programme came from discussion between Canterbury Christ Church University and Medway Local Authority in relation to the need of the latter to make use of funding for leadership development that had been allocated as part of an OfSTED action plan but which had not yet been disbursed.   The discussions resulted in the agreement that the university would work with a representative from the Local Authority in order to design and implement a programme with would offer opportunity to increase the capacity of leadership of schools within the Authority.

The eventual programme that emerged from the planning meetings represented a significant departure from the "standard model" for training and development courses.   These had tended in recent years to focus on management issues and structures or on very specific and sometime narrow and rather reactive requirements generated with schools, the needs of which were paramount in driving the shape and outcomes of any such activities.   They also followed a pattern in which the content was dictated by the interaction of the agreed objectives within school leaders' transactional Continuing Professional Development activities tied into their appraisal and School Plans.   This was in reaction to the driving forces of school performance data and restrictive budgets.   The result has been that participants have confined to internal or very locally-based learning environments (e.g. within a Multi-Academy Trust or local collaborative).   Consequently, many leaders report that this had not deepened or extended their leadership capacity and has not effectively enabled real personal development to take place.

Therefore, the somewhat radical decision was taken that what would be provided was a development opportunity/programme rather than a systematised "course".   This is described in more detail in section 3 of this report.

2. Methodology for the evaluation

2.1 Limitations

2.1.1 Scope
The request for this evaluation was made in mid-June 2017.   The foci and methodology were mapped and agreed by the end of that month which left only four weeks before the end of the academic year to develop and agree the evaluative instruments and processes around the commitments of the programme tutors and to make initial contact with the participants and to set up interviews before the long summer holiday period.   This inevitably restricted the ability to undertake any meetings or interviews with participants because they were heavily engaged in assessment and end of year activities in their respective schools.   In addition, because the request was that an evaluation report should be made available as early as possible in the new academic year, the selection of samples of participants and the arrangements to engage them in interviews and focus groups in September had to be concluded before the end of July.   As a result, reliance had to be made on who was available in early September and what arrangements could effectively be put in place during that time to collect appropriate data for the evaluation.   This inevitably restricted the range of those sampled and made it not impossible to trial instruments before data collection began.

The original design for interviews to take place on two dates in early September were abandoned because of the lack of participants from each of the two cohorts who had availability on those dates. To compensate, a telephone interview based on the questionnaire was arranged and took place with the four participants who were originally available for the planned interview meetings.

The focus group which took place had five attendees; three were from one secondary school and two from the same primary school. This clearly impacted on the range of respondents, although the participants from the same school did focus on and emphasise their own particular experience.

2.1.2 Timescale
The resulting schedule which was initially arranged for undertaking the evaluation was as follows:

- Design, publishing distribution of questionnaires - July
- Documentation review – July & August
- Email and telephone responses – July & early September
- Focus group with tutor/facilitators – early September
- Two interview sessions with individual selected participants – early September
- Focus group with selected participants – mid September
- Collation and analysis of data – late September and October
- Production and submission of evaluation report – November

In the actual schedule that took place (as mentioned in 2.1.1 above), the interviews planned for individual participants on the two days did not occur because of the final lack of availability of those selected to attend. These were replaced by individual interviews conducted on the telephone.

2.2 Data collection

2.2.1 Documentation review
During July and August a review was made of available documentation and resources. These consisted of: the "flyer" advertising the programme to schools; a sample of participant's applications, the materials and slideshows used in the residential weekends and twilight sessions. Additionally, an examination was undertaken of the "padlet" which had been established as a repository for all the materials and reference documents used in the programme.

2.2.2 Instruments
 Two questionnaires were designed (*see annexes 6.1 & 6.2*): one for participants and one for the tutor/facilitators of the programme. These were designed to be used flexibly. They were sent to all participants in July who were then encouraged to make their responses via email to the evaluator. Unfortunately, (as mentioned in 2.1.1 above), there was insufficient time to trial the questionnaires before their use to collect "live" data. Also, participants were offered the opportunity to telephone the evaluator in September to explain their responses to the questions. Finally, the questions were used as reference points/prompts in a focus group with available participants in mid-September.

2.2.3 Analysis & Reporting
Data/responses from the questionnaires, telephone interviews and the focus group, together with information obtained from the documentation and "padlet" review were collated during the last two weeks of September. Analysis was subsequently undertaken during the first week of October, leading to the preparation of the draft report during the second week of that month. The draft was

then reviewed by tutors/facilitators for accuracy, leading to the submission of the final report at the end of November 2017.

3. Description of the Programme

3.1 Application & Take Up

Potential participants were invited to apply in mid-July 2016 using an online application form to which they were given access following an initial telephone inquiry to a number provided on the information pack/flyer sent out to Medway schools by the Local Authority and Canterbury Christ Church University [CCCU]. This was in response to the "flyer" or to publicity undertaken by Medway Local Authority. Assistance with distribution and awareness-raising was also provided by Rochester Diocese.

The flyer described the programme as "*A dynamic action research programme for senior, middle and aspirational leaders, delivered in partnership with Canterbury Christchurch (*sic*) University."*   It offered to …"*Develop and hone leadership skills that support:*

- *Aspirational target-setting*
- *Self-direction and resilience in school leaders*
- *Transformational leadership*
- *Accountability and autonomy*
- *Networks of community learning and self-improving school-led systems*
- *World class leadership development."*

The publicised start date was autumn 2016 in two cohorts with limited places Cohort 1 was scheduled to commence with a residential weekend on 9-11 September 2016, followed by three twilight sessions between September 2016 and January 2017. Cohort 2 was to begin with a similar residential experience on an unspecified weekend in November 2016, followed by three twilight sessions between November 2016 and March 2017.

Further information was provided about:

- Why a local leadership programme was needed – *"to facilitate cross-school learning, enhance local networks and enable partnership approaches that benefit the children of Medway and the wider school community;"* and as…"*an important investment in the sustainability of a local school-led system of the future."*

- The nature of action research – explaining that the research questions are identified as those being of value to the participants themselves and their setting; that the stages develop over time in response to interactions and provision and that …"*the learning is of value whether the project is successful or not, as it allows a deeper understanding of possibilities, processes and often provokes new questions as a result.*"

- The delivery pattern and style of the programme – the purpose of the residential at the start of the programme was described as being designed to: "*set the context and provide a springboard for extended study over several months.*" Tutor support was described as

designed to: "*… allow the planned development of projects to explore aspects of leadership appropriate to the individual's role.*" Twilight sessions were aimed at offering: "*… critical and objective discussion around the chosen topics.*" Finally, a dissemination event was planned for July 2017… "*to showcase the learning and outcomes from the programme.*"

- How much time to commit to the programme – reference was made to the initial weekend residential and the subsequent three twilight sessions. Participants were warned to allocate time for reading, planned reflection and further investigation. Support was to be offered in the form of: "*Time with a school-based mentor… in addition to academic support from a university tutor.*" Total learning time was logged as "*approximately 50 hours… allocated over the course of the whole programme – including activities undertaken during the school day as part of the study.*"

- Cost – which was to be nil for all Medway schools and academies.

- The application process – which was to be via written applications that would be considered by a panel.

The closing date for applications was 11 July 2016. Selection was undertaken by a panel comprising representatives from Medway Local Authority, CCCU and the Medway Teaching School Alliance which met on 13 July. Decisions were communicated to participants on 15 July.

There were 43 initial expressions of interest which eventually resulted in 32 applications. Consequently, all applications were accepted because they did not exceed the number of available places in the programme which had been set at 50. Applicants were predominantly from primary schools, with 7 coming from secondary education and 1 from a Pupil Referral Unit. Approximately 63% were teachers (aspiring leaders), 28% middle leaders and 9% senior leaders.

An important element of the application was a section asking applicants to specify their learning objectives for attending the programme in not more than 500 words. This was used as the initial basis for developing the focus of the actual action research project.

3.2   Design & Content

3.2.1 Design
Applicants had been asked to express a preference for one of two cohorts each designed to contain up to 25 participants. Around half of the applications indicated that they had the support of the Headteacher of their school; the others either didn't indicate whether or not this had been obtained, or in some cases, stated that it had not yet been given at the time of application.

Each of the two cohorts began the programme with a weekend residential session, beginning on the Friday evening and finishing on the Sunday lunchtime. The first residential for cohort 1 was between 9 and 11 September 2016 and the second for cohort 2 was between 25 and 27 November 2017.
The residential sessions were followed by a series of twilight meetings for each cohort. These took place as follows: 11 January, 2 and 22 March (optional/drop in), 25 April, 23 May 2017. In addition, the tutors offered responsive and specific one-to-one sessions with participants who requested them.

These sequential twilight sessions continued to support the development and application of the necessary skills and knowledge required to successfully undertake the research. They provided the opportunity for participants to share progress, issues and strategies with colleagues from their own and other schools. These also enabled face-to-face access with tutors where difficulties in implementation could be examined and addressed and personal support or motivation could be given. An integral element was the opportunity for participants to reflect on their own learning and personal development during the programme and to relate this to their own value structures and beliefs. This has been identified as an essential facet of becoming an inspirational and motivation leader.

The intention was to provide an environment where teachers and leadership could talk openly and honestly about their working conditions, personal development and professional situation in a safe, secure setting with tutors and each other. This was a vital ingredient because there is little scope for teachers to do this within their institutions where there is an increasingly demanding focus on the needs of the school and measured outcomes for students/pupils which then contextualises the opportunities for teacher development to fit these requirements. Thus, one of the key outputs of the programme was to be the personal development of the individual participants rather than the focus being wholly on the production and implementation of an action research project and the skills relating to this.

A "Padlet" (online repository of resources and links) was made available to participants via a secure log in. This was managed by the tutors and was made necessary because participants were unable (for administrative reasons) to access Canterbury Christ Church University's library facilities. Tutors uploaded supportive background resources, relevant articles, and links to online materials. The slideshows that were used in the residential and twilight sessions were posted there as soon as possible after each of the respective sessions had taken place. In addition, tutors regularly emailed copies of the slideshows directly to each of the participants.

The action research projects that were initially designed and developed during the residential sessions were undertaken throughout the period up to June 2017. These were essentially focused on an area for investigation or development that related to identified improvements in each of the School Development Plans or to the specific work of a participant. These were then undertaken in each of the participant's schools with varying support from peers within each establishment.

The intention was that following submission of the final outcomes of the projects, these were to be compiled into a booklet that would be made available to all Medway schools. This is to be supported by a dissemination event which was planned for July 2017 but which it still in the process of being arranged with Medway Local Authority.

3.2.2 Content
Participants were asked to the focus the content of their action research project on a key development area for them as leaders or their school (as identified in its School Plan). In both cases, it should have an outcome that contained elements that were beneficial to them as aspiring or developing leaders and to the school with regard to improved educational practice or provision.

The management of the content and learning approaches was supported by a "suggested writing frame" that was provided by the tutors (*see annex 6.3*). This framework essentially guided

participants in the structure and reporting of their research in a systematic and uniform manner that would also ensure that it met recognised standards and accessibility requirements.

3.3 Implementation

The programme departed from the "normal" mode of delivery for a longer-running CPD course which usually featured a series of twilight sessions by beginning with a weekend residential held in a hotel located some way away from Medway. This was a deliberate decision to ensure that participants were not on their "home turf"; would therefore not be subject to distractions and could feel able to fully engage or immerse themselves in the activities. In addition, they were actively encouraged to use the guest facilities in the hotel to help them become more relaxed and feel valued.

The focus of the residential approach was to assist participants in increasing their capacity to undertake targeted action/class-based research. In most cases, participants had not engaged in this kind of research activity before, therefore there was a considerable need to hone the required skills and enhance knowledge of the methodologies and processes. Thus, the content of the residential weekend included the analysis, understanding and development of these. The end point of the residential was that the participants should have a clear personal choice of what to research based on relevance to them and have ownership of it, rather than undertaking a project that was solely driven by school needs via the School Plan or other priorities.

Following the introductory residential sessions, participants embarked upon the series of twilight sessions (*see 3.2.1 above*) which were designed to support the continual development of their research knowledge and skills whilst also simultaneously providing the opportunity for peer discussion and tutor guidance. This part of the programme was provided as a key element in helping participants to keep focus, confidence and motivation, review their progress and be able to seek additional guidance and support as they worked on their research topic in school. It also provided further access to research tools and processes which were explained and discussed during the sessions. The content of these (predominantly slide presentations, relevant/supportive articles and research references) was then uploaded to the "padlet" for continued access and emailed to everyone for personal reference.

These twilight sessions proved to be the most demanding aspect of the programme for participants (for reasons explained in more detail under "Findings"), resulting in a gradual reduction in numbers attending as the programme progressed. Eventually, the decision was taken to enable participants from either cohort to attend whichever sessions they chose rather than adhere specifically to those intended for a particular cohort.

In addition to the structured content, there was the opportunity for discussion with tutors on a one-to-one basis where participants considered they needed more guidance or support. Several took advantage of this facility. Tutors made themselves readily available before or after session to provide this. Furthermore, tutors spoke to participants on the phone and entered into email exchanges to deal with individual needs. In this way, the level of support required by each participant was dictated by circumstances, was responsive and was significantly led by them.

In between the twilights participants undertook their action research in their respective schools with support from colleagues with whom they worked and through email exchanges. In some instances,

two or three participants were located in the same school and in some of those situations, they actively supported each other; although there were cases where participants did not do this. It appears that it was more common for those in primary schools to provide a greater level of peer support than was the case in secondary schools. This was largely a result of the organisational and timetable factors in the latter. In some schools the support was organised on a more formal basis whilst in most it was an informal arrangement between colleagues.

A few research projects were modified in response to implementation conditions or changes of emphasis agreed with tutors en route but the vast majority followed the proposal and plan developed during the residential weekend.

At the time of reporting, 19 participants had completed their research projects and submitted these for inclusion in the booklet – 7 from cohort 1 and 12 from cohort 2.

4. Findings

4.1 Programme Rationale & Design

The decision to deliver the programme with its core focus on the interaction of the personal and professional developmental needs of actual and aspiring school leaders appears to have been highly successful in securing their engagement and sustainable development. The re-focusing of it as a programme increasing the capacity of leaders through the medium of action research supported by personal development rather than as a "standard" professional development course was innovative. The mix of aspiring and current leaders provided a valuable interactive and dynamic setting which enabled them to share personal and professional views and experiences which was clearly motivational and deepened their learning. Participants viewed this as an opportunity to meeting colleagues outside of their own school, get beyond the "school agenda" for professional development and focus on their own leadership development needs. One said:

> "*I saw this programme as a real opportunity to invest in my personal leadership development in a very different way to usual run of the mill 'courses'*".

It was generally seen as a chance to approach leadership development in a different way through the provision of an environment that actively promoted personal reflection and support for individual learning needs. It was also this rationale which attracted a range of teachers to apply to participate in the programme because of its design as an action research project which supported development over an extended period rather than the more normal "course" approach that compressed delivery into a single session.

Another compelling aspect of the design for many participants was that it was made evident in the publicity materials that were distributed to schools that: "*the learning is of value whether the project is successful or not as it allows a deeper understanding of possibilities, processes and often provokes new questions as a result.*"

4.2 Engagement in the Programme

4.2.1 Application & Access

Most of the participant respondents stated that they considered the **application process** was quick and easy to use. A few used the enquiry telephone number to ask for more details before

completing their applications and reported finding it very helpful.   However, a small number of participants stated that they found the process initially "*rather vague*" and that it took some time to complete.   This was apparently because they were not absolutely sure of what was expected to be written on the application form. Several of those who commented on this said that they asked their headteacher to assist in completing their application before submitting it.   One stated: "*I felt the extent of the action research project side of it was not made clear at the application stage.*" One other said (in reference to the expected work commitment): " *With hindsight perhaps I should not have continued and given a choice I would have removed myself from the programme.*" Another stated: "*… the time and commitment should have been made clear from the start on the 'flyer' or as part of the application process.*"   However, a*ll of those who commented on the application process reported finding the 500 words on an area of interest and the background information that was provided to support the application valuable, suggesting that those who were not fully satisfied with their initial engagement were influenced in making that judgement by personal circumstances rather than by the processes available to applicants.

4.2.2 Reasons for application

An examination of the **reasons why participants applied** to take part in the programme produced a variety of responses. These included:

"*an opportunity to mix with other aspiring leaders from other schools in order to develop further as a leader.*"

"*I saw this programme as a real opportunity to invest in my personal leadership development in a very different way to the usual run of the mill courses.*"

"*meeting and talking outside of school and '*own school agenda'; *an opportunity to step back and take a measured look at things from outside school.*"

"*…being able to research my own area of interest.*"

"*leading towards a Middle Leader development programme…*"

"*I wanted to undertake academic study again as part of my professional development.*"

"*…being told how valuable we were and how Medway wanted to invest in us as educators and leaders.*"

4.2.3 Support for application

In the majority of cases, applications were supported by the headteacher of the school and in a considerable number of cases there was a conditional element in that participants were asked or encouraged to focus on a topic/area for their action research which was mentioned in the respective School Development Plan as a priority.   One comment stated: "*This (*the research topic) *was completely linked to the school's development needs at a time of great transition and turmoil for us. It enabled me to examine some issues objectively and productively.*"   In only one or two cases there was no active support from the headteacher, leaving participants having to devise strategies to get around this impediment.

In all cases, respondents reported that once on the programme they received encouragement and support from colleagues within their own school and from colleagues in other schools who were

fellow participants. This was then significantly augmented by the support and guidance given by the course tutors.

4.2.4 Engagement in the action research project

Almost all of the participants stated that once they had embarked on the implementation of their action research project they were able to make progress without major impediment. Many commented that this was because they had chosen a topic/area which was either based on previous background work done in school or they had: "…*deliberately structured the research project to ensure successful participation of other staff in school…*" who were then able to support implementation.

One of the biggest factors reportedly affecting the successful implementation of the action research was unsurprisingly time pressure. Many had planned specific days for undertaking certain activities that were "*squeezed out*" by demands that arose in the school day. Most frequently mentioned constraints were: "*It took longer to do the activities than I thought*"; "*Liaisons with others arranged as part of the study were not always effective or possible…*"; "*urgent events in school had to take precedence*"; *Time to do the reading required was sometimes difficult because of the nature of that kind of reading and finding adequate time to do it.*"

A number of participants commented that a significant amount of the work had to be done in their own time and that this made… "*back pressures on families very noticeable.*" Others mentioned that they sometimes felt guilty about using time for the research. A few considered that their write up of their project did not have the quality or depth that they would have wished because of work and time constraints.

There was an issue for some in the initial engagement in the implementation of the action research in the first few months as a result of the need to get these effectively planned into the school environment and routine demands relating to the operation of tasks in school at particular times of the year (e.g. trips, exams, pupil/student performances and major sporting events).   Some participants were able to negotiate time out of the classroom to undertake some project-related tasks, particular when it came to writing up findings toward the end of the programme.

Again, all participants were adamant that the support of tutors was paramount in enabling them to address and overcome the difficulties faced during the implementation of their research project. The 'on demand' one-to-one sessions, telephone conversations and email exchanges were critical in keeping them on track, motivated and engaged.

4.3 Impact of Structure

4.3.1 Residential Weekend

The major vehicle for inducting and engaging participants in the programme was the initial **residential weekend**. It was essentially the "launch event" for the programme. For all participants, this was a critical factor in motivating them and facilitating their access to and engagement in the action research process. It was evident from responses that most of the participants had no experience of action research prior to their application.

An important feature of the residential was that non-directive learning situations were also available to participants by choice. These included sporting/recreational activities which promoted social interaction and bonding which increased confidence, strengthened professional discussions and led

to friendships being formed that extended beyond the programme. This environment greatly supported the personal development of participants and enabled them to feel valued.

There was unequivocal agreement amongst the participants that the residential experience was the single most important factor in facilitating their engagement in the action research programme. "*The residential weekend was vital – it gave time out to really think about the programme and to get fully engaged and focused.*" This latter point was reiterated in responses and in the focus group discussion. Being able to spend time away from school and other pressures in order to get fully immersed in the processes of action research was considered to be one of the critical aspects which enabled those participating to be prepared and motivated to undertake and benefit from the programme.

The experience was described as "*the essential first step in entering on the learning journey*" that would see participants develop as competent and confident researchers and leaders by the end of the programme. This was an initial induction into action research for the majority which… "*peaked my enthusiasm and gave me many ideas as to how to conduct research; the* 'why' *behind my research and in formulating my research question.*"

The way in which the weekend was organised and the content of the two days made a significant impact on all those that attended. Participants commented that it was an invaluable bonding exercise which made them feel valued.   The context for this was one which made them feel: "*relaxed; away from everything; having no distractions*", which was reportedly for most a very unusual opportunity which contrasted markedly with the usual forms of professional development that were available to teachers and leaders in schools. One participant commented: "*It provided a space in which to be vulnerable without fear of judgement or reprisal.*" For most, this was an unusual and extremely rewarding experience that would not normally be found during the course of their work in school or with colleagues participating in the more usual forms of professional development.

Another major element of the content was that … "*it really encouraged me to think about things in a different way.*" The way in which the tutors encouraged and supported people reportedly valued them as professionals and personally. This was viewed as … "*a very different way of engaging in learning.*"   It enabled participants to look at other educational matters beyond the limiting environment of their own school and to examine other viewpoints and methods of developing their leadership skills in a way that put them at the heart of the process, rather than the school or some other 'agenda' being the focus of the outcome. One participant explained: "*The weekend away was fantastic. It provided real time to devote and focus on the project for a concentrated period; an opportunity to step out of the chaos of everyday life and breathe and think deeply and valuably.*"

The interaction with the tutors during the residential weekend was noted as another key element in facilitating participants' successful engagement in the programme. Dialogue around professional matters in a 'free' context which supported lateral thinking and the focus on development based on referencing personal values which could then be applied to the action research represented a unique experience for most. The opportunity to evaluate personal goals and potential progress in leadership roles as career development was important for many people because this approach is not possible within most school's cultures as these are very much concerned with data and linking the professional development of teachers and leaders to this.   The focus on the leader as a person, reviewing and incorporating their values, beliefs and aspirations into the process and application of

the action research project was for them both extremely valuable and unusual.   It led many to comment that they felt empowered as aspiring leaders for the first time in their teaching career. The discussions of these with tutors and reflection upon them engendered by tutors was a core feature in effectively guiding participants in how to tackle their action research project.

This initial group exposure to action research within their own educational institutions strongly supported the exploration and development of research techniques.   It was structured in such a way as to guide them through the steps on the "learning journey" which incrementally began with what was described as a very solid foundation during the residential and progressed throughout the programme.

4.3.2 Pattern , Location & Timing of Twilight Sessions

The "learning journey" continued by means of the sequence of **twilight sessions** which followed after the residential weekend.   These sessions were designed to continue the development of participants' knowledge and skills with regard to action research; support them in undertaking and managing the research in their respective schools and provide them with opportunities to seek additional help or motivation throughout the programme. Each of them had a specific focus and became 'milestones' on the learning journey.   Drop-in twilights were put in between the programmed sessions and participants were actively encouraged to talk with each other outside of the sessions. Some participants 'buddied up' with a colleague from the same school.

These were predominantly attended by participants from the primary schools. It appeared that secondary colleagues found after school meetings much more difficult to attend even though there was sufficient notice of these; the dates having been published at the beginning of programme. Events in school which reportedly were deemed a priority prevented regular attendance by some.

Attendance was therefore variable and this led to participants being able to attend any twilight session that was convenient to them rather than that which was specifically designated for their particular cohort.   An unexpected outcome of this action reported by participants was that it enabled more colleagues to engage in discussions and peer-support than would have possibly otherwise been the case.

A number of participants commented that the timing being almost directly at the end of the school day was not always conducive to school or family arrangements and often caused them to have to rush to get there in time.   It was noted that some of the sessions ran quite late which made concentration difficult after a long day of teaching in school. One participant commented: "*We were given opportunities in many of the twilights to look at our data together, discuss bits and pieces relating to our work, but sometimes I felt that I then needed time to go and act on those things, but couldn't because I was straight back into teaching the next day and the twilight was until 6 p.m. already and therefore there was not much time after it.*"

However, the location of the sessions in the Medway campus of CCCU was considered to be an important factor in enabling most to be able to attend. Also, the interactive nature of the majority of the twilights mitigated against the inherent tiredness and did enable participants to engage in the learning.

Additionally, tutors uploaded all of the materials from each twilight to the "padlet" and directly emailed important content and references individually to all participants after each session. This was greatly valued because it not only enabled those who had attended to reflect more fully on the

materials and their content or to discuss these with colleagues, but also permitted those who were unable to attend a session to have access to its content and outcomes.

The provision of additional one-to-one sessions with tutors was noted as an extremely valuable aspect. In most cases, participants considered that this gave them a vital opportunity to discuss difficulties or additional learning needs directly with tutors on a personal basis and to obtain specific guidance. A few participants noted that without this facility and support, they might well have decided to end their participation in the programme.

4.4 Learning Processes and Materials

4.4.1   Use of the "Padlet"

As mentioned in section 3 of this report, the 'padlet' had been designed as a support for learning- a depository for learning materials, exemplars and important references, tips and hints.   However, the majority of participants reported that they hardly used it. The reasons for this were:

- The format/layout made finding items sometimes quite difficult and time consuming
- Some people were unable to access it at work because of firewalls in networks
- The emails sent by tutors which contained the slides used in twilights suited many better because it came directly to them and they could download these quickly and store them on their own laptops or PCs for frequent access.

Those that did access it found that its uses were:

- The slides from the twilight were documented under each session rather than spread throughout several emails
- As a memory jog for important actions or information and references
- To remind participants of key dates.

4.4.2   Important aspects of the learning approach

Some participants found… "*getting into the style of learning very difficult at first; had to think about things in a different way*", but noted that the "*hands on approach*" and "*lack of rigid expectations*" together with the examples from other action research that were made available as exemplars were important aspects that enabled participants to overcome initial uncertainties of their own capacity to undertake their project.

The valuing of each participant and personal support given to them inspired their learning and engagement. Facilitation of each of their learning styles was a key factor in building confidence and the development of research techniques. The fact that this was linked with guidance that enabled them to access and build in their own values and beliefs into the research and to constantly reference and discuss this with colleagues and tutors was an undoubtedly a major element in successfully developing the requisite leadership knowledge and skills which were the focus of the programme.

'Scaffolding' provided by tutors which was tied in to exemplar materials, the promotion of lateral thinking and deep reflection was another critical feature of the learning approach. All participants reported that being actively encouraged to engage in their own development in this way was one of the key motivational aspects for them.

The support for learning and development provided by colleagues in school which was built around the action research project was found to be very valuable. In some cases, schools provided cover to enable research work or reading to be done. Many participants reported that their learning experience was enhanced through relating to a range of stakeholders who assisted formally or informally with their research. This included family members, parents of pupils/students, colleagues in their own and other schools and senior school leaders. They remarked that the action research approach was the means that brought about this integrated approach to learning which would otherwise have been "*narrowly focused continuing professional development provided by set courses or specific one off events/opportunities.*"

Additionally, the opportunity to present research findings to others and to engage in other local events which would support and broaden their overall learning and development were made available to participants at various times in the course of the programme.

This approach was further supported by the fact that many of the participants met informally with colleagues outside of organised programme sessions in order to discuss their work, learning achievements and share ways of improving the quality of their action research.

4.4.3   Value of the learning materials

The incremental approach embodied in the learning materials was welcomed by all participants. These supported what tutors called a "slow distillation" of learning which unfolded as the programme developed.

The mix of PowerPoint slide presentations from the residential and twilight sessions, stimulating materials, prior project work, references to relevant and related research/research techniques and links to helpful websites containing resources were a valuable feature of the programme which was applauded by all participants. Most of these were made available on the 'padlet' and/or were emailed to participants.

Participants were able to access these materials not only during the planned sessions of the programme but also during their own time or, where possible, at school. They were also able to apply them flexibly to adapt to their own particular values and methodologies in supporting the implementation of their action research projects. Moreover, they could follow up and discuss the effectiveness of the materials in personal sessions with tutors or via email conversations throughout the programme.

There was consensus amongst participants that the range of materials and resources that were made available to them were very accessible and provided them with not only effective and focused support for their study or their work in school as leaders but also for them personally.   The latter were those that helped them to develop wide-ranging thinking skills; the ability to probe and question efficiently; methods for instilling their own values and beliefs appropriately into their work and as an eclectic reservoir for their own personal development.

4.5 Value and Outcomes of the Action Research Project

Responses from participants were unequivocal in valuing their action research projects. The two aspects of this were:

- The dynamic use in the improvement of teaching and learning and leadership actions during the course of participation in the programme; and

- The outputs of the project with reference to their work in school.

Many participants reported that the implementation of the project and the engagement of colleagues in support of this in their respective schools was a useful mechanism for driving forward improvements which were of benefit to pupils/students and their schools overall. This manifested itself in the form of improvement in systems used that were designed to enhance or appropriately focus teaching strategies; different and more effective ways of using colleagues' knowledge and skills; extending the range of leadership styles in order to motivate or direct colleagues towards better progress or attainment for pupils/students.

Most considered that these benefits were such that they would become part of the sustained development for practice within the department or school.

4.6 Impact of the Programme

The **impact** of the programme as described by participants was, in all cases, a very positive one. Responses included the following examples of the impact observed and reported by participants:

"The impact of the project on the team structures(within school) and how I as a leader deal with people is already evident and will continue to develop more as we are going to look at the implications of my research as an SLT."

"The project developed my own professional development as a teacher and subject leader, embedded science practice in school, supported other colleagues in understanding the importance of science and also was a feature of our recent OfSTED inspection report recognising the 'good' practice of middle leaders."

"This programme gave me leadership skills and research skills as a direct value."

"Indirectly, my research project will have an impact on my personal planning and teaching, and the information will be passed on to Senior Leadership to inform future Whole School Planning."

"For me personally, this project was invaluable; it really enabled me to take time out to reflect on my leadership skills and weaknesses along with my inherent values."

"The research has had a positive impact – I will use it to improve PHSE provision this academic year. Some elements of the research have been used en route through being able to apply formative results of the research."

One participant sent an email message to say that the action research projects that were being undertaken by her and a colleague in the same school had been very favourably mentioned in an OfSTED report on the inspection of their school in June 2017. She also went on to say that this was a key part of the report and that it had been contributory in the school moving from "Requires Improvement" category to "Good."

The enthusiasm for the programme and the benefits of its outcomes were very evident in some of the personal comments provided by participants, as in the following example:

"I absolutely loved participating in this project. I cannot properly express how important it was to me in the midst of a very difficult and challenging year."

"It (the programme) restored my faith in the value of CPD."

"It was great to get back into research that I could use as a practitioner."

There were also some additional benefits that arose from events or activities that were made available to participants during the course of the programme.   One illustration of this was:

"The opportunity to present my work at the conference in Sandwich was fantastic. I loved the day and the chance to share what I had done with people who were genuinely interested."

The proposed publication of the action research projects that have been written up and submitted will certainly provide an valuable ongoing resource and reference for teachers and leaders in Medway (and elsewhere). This will extend the impact of work in the wider educational environment and could well encourage others to undertake this kind of experience in the future.

The proposed "dissemination event" which was scheduled (in the publicity materials) for July 2017 has not yet taken place. This will also surely provide another opportunity to increase the profile and the impact of the work done in this programme.

Clearly, it was not possible in the time available for this evaluation to undertake an examination of even a sample of the impact of these projects and their direct and indirect impact on participants and their schools. However, the content and language of the responses from the participants – in questionnaires, focus group discussion and in telephone conversations does give an indication of the very positive impact of the programme and the consequent action research projects for individuals and for schools.   This is also partially supported in the objective OfSTED reports where inspectors have recognised and acknowledged this impact.

5. Observations, Conclusions & Recommendations

5.1 Observations & Conclusions

- The evidence obtained from questionnaires, group discussions and telephone conversations with participants and tutors strongly supports the opinion that **the programme very successfully achieved its objectives**.

- The volume of **applications and subsequent take up** for the programme might have been increased if the explanation/description of the programme and what it entailed had been more detailed and explicit. Many participants stated that they were not very clear on exactly what was required and who the potential target audience were. A significant proportion were of the opinion that the programme was actually… "*more about being a reflective practitioner than about leadership.*"

- All responses indicated that participants considered that the **methodology** used in the programme made them feel valued as people and professionals; increased their self-esteem; enhanced their knowledge and skills and gave them practical approaches and resources which improved their work as leaders and teachers.

- The **"model"** at the heart of the programme which focused on facilitating the personal and professional aspects of participants in equal balance and without the more normal constraints imposed by "traditional" professional development was recognised by all as a very successful

enabling tool. This was noted as a core element in giving participants the confidence to undertake the action research project and the skills to ensure that they were doing so effectively.

- The **residential weekend** was the single most important factor in the design and delivery of the programme in motivating and facilitating the meaningful engagement of participants in the programme. It was considered to be the "jewel in the crown" of the programme which gave participants the best possible start to their action research project.

- The **sequence of twilights** were valuable in supporting the ongoing development of the action research and in providing opportunities for sharing and receiving additional guidance from tutors. However, this value was variable for some participants, particularly those from secondary institutions whose attendance diminished as the programme progressed. This drop-off appears to have mainly been the result of various pressures imposed by demands in schools. This was reportedly disappointing for many participants because it reduced cohesiveness and they valued the opportunity to exchange views and share progress with the full range of colleagues participating in the programme. There was an acknowledgement from most participants that the use of twilights always presented problems for them and for tutors/organisers because of the constraints from schools and family commitments, the mental condition of people at the end of a frequently long day n school and the limitations of time.

- The **effectiveness of the tutors** – the quality of their inputs, their responsiveness to the needs of individual participants, the incremental provision of resources and the stimulating nature of the materials and approaches provided by them - was a major factor in empowering participants to successfully engage in and take benefit from the programme.

- The **"padlet"** was a limited success. It was undoubtedly a useful repository for materials, references and links but access issues and its format diminished the effectiveness of its use.

- Although **participation in the programme** and undertaking the action research project appeared to have yielded neither promotion nor increased remuneration for the participants, all reported enhanced leadership and teaching benefits and, in most cases, that the action research project had impacted positively on practice and teaching and learning outcomes for pupils/students.

- A few of the participants had been motivated by their engagement in the programme to **undertake further more formal/accredited study**, usually in the form of an MA. One or two actually dropped out of the programme in order to pursue this.

5.2 Recommendations

- Instigate a general meeting of potential applicants based on initial responses to the publicity materials in order to make the target audience, expectations and design of the programme very explicit. This could promote increased participation and possibly reduce drop-out.

- Examine the timing and length of twilight sessions in order to mitigate against the impact of family and school constraints and the diminished engagement through tiredness.

- Consider the use of "official" mentor support for participants in their respective schools. [**Note – this was mentioned in the publicity material but was not provided**]. It is recognised that this could have a cost implication but the benefits in terms of increased quality of engagement (and particularly project write-up), and reduced burden on tutors and colleagues in schools who were both filling that gap could be of great value.

- Find a way to enable participants to access library facilities at Canterbury Christ Church University as this would remove the problems and constraints associated with the "padlet".

- Secure and publicise a date for the "dissemination event" (launching the publication of the booklet containing the action research project) at the commencement of the programme to ensure that slippage and resultant reduction in participation and impact does not occur.

- Initial clear indication of the options for accreditation for the work undertaken during the action research or, if possible, access to formal accreditation following completion would provide a considerable incentive for participation and moreover encourage the long-term application of skills and outcomes generated through engagement in the programme.

- The assessment of the longer-term impact of the action research projects and the corresponding outcomes would benefit hugely from a follow up evaluation at the end of the current academic year.   This might take the form of email questionnaires or telephone interviews with all or selected participants, supported by visits to a range of schools.

6. Annexes

6.1 Participant Questionnaire
6.2   Tutor Questionnaire
6.3   Writing Frame

Medway Leadership Programme – Evaluation

Questions for Participants

Reponses can be made by email, in focus group discussions, or in individual interviews.
All responses will be treated confidentially

1. How did you learn about the programme?

2. How informative and easy was the application process?

3. How clear and accessible was the information about the programme?

4. Why did you apply to be part of it?

5. Were you supported/encouraged by your school to participate?

6. How did you decide on your learning objective(s)?

7. How closely did the final focus of your action research match your original objectives?

8. How important to you was ease of access and the pattern of attendance/participation?

9. What was the impact of the residential in helping you to prepare and engage in the programme?

10. How convenient was the timing and location of the cohort sessions?

11. What support and guidance did you get in and out of school during your participation?

12. How relevant were the learning materials and processes to you?

13. How did you use the "padlet" and the materials/information that it contained?

14. How well were you able to undertake the activities related to your action research project?

15. Where any difficulties in pursuing your project arose, how were these addressed?

16. How did the focus and/or approach of your project change during your participation, if at all?

17. What direct and indirect value and impact resulted from your participation in the programme?

18. How has your employment status changed as a result of engagement in the programme?

19. On reflection, what was most effective and least effective in the programme and activities?

20. What changes would you recommend if the programme were to be re-run?

21. Any other confidential comments not covered by these questions….

Medway Leadership Programme – Evaluation

Questions for Tutors/Facilitators

Reponses can be made by email, in focus group discussions, or in individual interviews.
All responses will be treated confidentially

1. What was your specific role in the programme?

2. What part did you play in: a) designing; b) resourcing; c) delivering the programme?

3. How was the programme publicised and who had responsibility for doing this?

4. How were participants selected to take part in the programme?

5. What was the relevance of a cohort and how was membership of one decided?

6. How much guidance was given to participants in selecting their action research project?

7. How did you mentor/support individual participants throughout the programme?

8. How were participants supported and guided when implementing their action research project?

9. How responsive were participants to advice and guidance?

10. What was the focus and intention of the initial residential experience?

11. What were the objectives of the sessions with the cohorts?

12. How well did the programme adhere to its planned/original structure and intentions?

13. How successful were the strategies for sustaining participants' engagement in the programme?

14. How were learning approaches and interactions with participants personalised to meet needs?

15. Are there any other confidential or relevant comments that have not been covered?

6.3 Writing Frame

Research Project: A Suggested Writing Frame

Title

Not necessarily your research question

Name of school

As it should appear in the booklet

Name(s) of who was/were involved/authored the report

As they would like their names to appear in the booklet

Contact details

This could be school email addresses and/or school telephone number – don't use your personal details

Introduction

Why was this project undertaken and the research question explored?

Research question (and any subsidiary questions)

Method(s)

What did you do?

What did you learn?

Explain in prose, images, tables or bullet points. The most interesting of reports usually contain several of these elements

Next steps

What might you want to continue with, explore in addition or any other actions being considered

Reference list

This will help anyone who follows your pathway – it doesn't have to be exhaustive

Please email back to peter.gregory@canterbury and jennifer.shearman@canterbury.ac.uk

Agenda Item 6:
Schools in Financial Difficulty due to statuary class sizes management Policy

1.   Overview

1.1   This funding policy is for revenue associated reorganisations only and does not relate to capital items.

1.2   Schools (the term schools used throughout this document includes academies) can access the funding and eligibility where there is a basic need requirement due to small statuary maximum class sizes of 30 in years R, 1 and 2. The DfE define Basic Need as new pupil places which are requested by the local authority because there are insufficient places available for pupils in the area.

1.3   Both the Medway Council's place planning team and the Schools Forum will determine if a school meets the eligibility criteria.

1.4   Funding will be allocated for one year only and will be paid on an academic year basis. Schools will need to reapply and submit a business case in November for funding each year if additional years funding is required.

2.   Criteria to access funding

2.1   Schools can request funding support if schools meet the following criteria:

- Those schools who can't reduce their published admissions numbers due to statuary school class sizes in key stage 1 i.e years R, 1 and 2.
- Where the place planning team determine there is a requirement for a minimum percentage of the surplus places within the next three years and can't enter into a local area amendment arrangement? Especially where the school has requested to reduce their PAN or enter into a local agreement which has been denied by the LA.
- Schools must submit a business case for approval by the Schools Forum in November so it can be discussed at the January Schools Forum meeting with funding starting from in September. i.e. submit business case in November 2017, Schools Forum approval in January 2018 with funding to start from September 2018. Where business cases are rejected, schools will be told why.
- The school does not receive pupil growth funding support for new classes.
- This funding is not intended to support schools who fall into financial difficulties through budget mismanagement.

3.   Methodologies for distributing funding

3.1   Funding will be for one year only and schools will need to reapply every year if additional funding is required. The funding is to help contribute towards the costs of a class teacher.

3.2   Schools must invoice the LA for this funding before 31 March of that financial year.

3.3   Due to the different financial years between academies and maintained schools, qualified funding will be £55,000 a year for schools.

4.   Budget

4.1 The budget will be set annually to support this policy.

Business Case

School Name:	
School Type:	
Amount of Funding:	
Is this your first year of requesting this funding?	
Class sizes over the past three years. Include offer day and October census day data.	

Year	Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Total				

Is this a temporary reduction in pupils? Why has this arisen? What are your future plans?	
Have you requested to reduce your PAN or entered into a local agreement with the LA or RSC? Explain the outcome and if not why not.	
What additional steps have you taken to reduce your expenditure?	
Any other key information.	

Official Use

Amount:	
School Forum Date:	
Approved/Rejected:	
Reason:	

Agenda Item 7:
2018-19 Round 1 Monitoring

1. Background Information

1.1   At their meetings in October 2017 and January 2018 the Schools' Forum, approved the local authority (LA) 2018-19 central services schools block dedicated schools grant (CSSB DSG) and the centrally retained budgets schools block (SB DSG).

1.2   This report is intended to provide an update on the year-end forecast of these budgets.

2. The 2018-19 Centrally Retained Forecasts

2.1   The Schools' Forum approved centrally retained budgets of £1,657, 367 from the schools block of the DSG which can be grouped into four categories:
- Growth Funding: £1,046,511
- Copyright Licenses: £248,203
- Contingency – Schools in Financial difficulty: £300,000
- Contingency – Other: £62,653

2.2   Table 1 below shows the round one monitoring forecast which predicts an overspend of £40,000 due to the additional rates funding which had to be paid to three schools costing £270,000 offset by the underspend of £230,000 on the schools in financial difficulty earmarked funding. This overspend will be deducted from the 2020 schools block DSG.

Table 1 – R1 Centrally Retained Budgets Schools Block.

	Approved Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Budget Variance £000's
Ongoing – Agreed New Class Lump Sums School/academies with approved PAN increases.	825	825	0
New – New Class Funding - Lump Sums School/academies with approved PAN increases.	73	73	0
Bulges Classes	148	148	0
Sub-Total Growth Fund	**1,046**	**1,046**	**0**
Schools in Financial Difficulty.	300	70	(230)
Other	63	333	270
Copyright Licenses	248	248	0
Sub-Total Others	**611**	**651**	**40**
Total	**1,658**	**1,697**	**40**

2.3   At the last Schools Forum meeting in July 2018, members agreed to increase the schools in financial difficulty funding to £55,000 per school which will increase the forecast to £110,000 taking the overspend to £80,000.

3. The 2018-19 De-delegated Services and Central Services Schools Blocks Forecasts

3.1 For 2018-19 financial year, the maintained members of The Schools' Forum approved three de-delegated services. Table 2 below shows the round one monitoring forecast which predicts a breake position.

Table 2 – R1 De-delegated Services and Central Services Schools Block.

	Approved Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Budget Variance £000's
Assessment of Eligibility for Free School Meals*	12	12	0
Trade Union Facilities *	6	6	0
Retained Statuary Services – Maintained Schools Only	679	679	0
Central Services Schools Block – Maintained and Academy	714	714	0
Total	**1,411**	**1,411**	**0**

 * Only shows the de-delegated element and not the academy buyback.

3.2 Table 3 provides the analysis on how the LA are spending the

Responsibilities for maintained schools	Schools Contribution 2018-19 £	Total Budget 2018-19 £	Forecast Outturn 2018-19*	Budget Variance £
Functions relating to LA pensions:	£302,755	£635,435	£635,435	£0
General landlord duties for all maintained schools.	£100,000	£250,000	£250,000	£0
National curriculum assessments and virtual head teacher.	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£0
Monitoring of school improvement.	£176,000	£350,000	£350,000	£0
Total	**£678,755**	**£1,335,435**	£1,335,435	**£0**

 *Only shows the de-delegated amount.

4. Schools' Forum Actions and Recommendations

4.1 The Schools' Forum are asked to **NOTE** and **COMMENT** on this report.

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1. Background Information

1.1 The national funding formula (NFF) operational guidance was published by the Education and Skills Finance Agency (ESFA) in July. The guidance is designed to help local authorities (LA) and their Schools' Forums to plan the local implantation of the funding system for 2019 to 2020 and the move towards a national NFF.

1.2 The LA must engage in open and transparent consultation with all maintained schools, academies and free schools in the area as well as with its Schools' Forum about any proposed changes to the funding formula including the methods, principles and rules adopted.

1.3 The Schools' Forum is required to approve expenditure which is funded from the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) even if the expenditure has been approved by the Schools Forum in previous years as well as the central services schools block of the DSG.

2. Timetable

2.1 The proposed 2019-2020 School and Academy funding formula timetable is contained in Appendix 1.

2.2 Historically there has been a low response rate from schools and academies to our funding formula consultations. One of the most consistent reasons for non-returns is that the consultation window of two weeks is too short.

2.3 Therefore this year Medway propose to increase the consultation timeframe to three weeks. However to accommodate this, the October Schools Forum meeting will need to be changed to 18 October 2018.

2.4 **The Schools' Forum is asked to approve the adoption of the proposed timetable set out in appendix 1 and to move the 4 October 2018 Schools Forum back by two weeks to 18 October 2018.**

3. 2019-20 Schools Block Dedicated Schools Grant (SB DSG)

3.1 The Funding Formula is used to distribute the Schools Block element of the DSG to all mainstream schools and academies fairly and transparently. Table 1 below shows a breakdown on Medway provisional 2019-20 SB DSG allocation of £176,375,983.

Description	£
2019-20 Provisional Pupil-Led Funding (Estimate)	172,916,538
2019-20 Actual Premises Funding	1,390,958
2019-20 Growth Funding (Estimate)	2,068,488
2019-20 Provisional SB DSG total funding	**176,375,983**
Number of pupils (2018-19 allocations)	39,776
2019-20 Provisional funding per pupil	4,434

3.2   Medway propose to transfer £880,000 (0.498%) from the SB to the high needs block for 2019-20 and require the schools forum Approval.

3.3   The provisional allocation available for distribution through the formula after allowable deductions is £175,001,983 (1% increase on 18-19) calculated as follows;

Initial Allocation Schools Block   £176,375,983
Less: 2019-20 Growth Fund   £   1,374,000
Less: HN block Transfer   £   880,000
Total for Allocation in Funding Formula   £174,121,983

4.   2019-20 De-delegated Services

4.1   Funding for de-delegated services must be allocated via the funding formula for maintained mainstream schools with the Schools' Forum approval. De-delegation is not applicable for special schools, academies and PRUs, but they can purchase the service via SLA online as a buy-back service.

4.2   The 2018-16 de-delegate services relate only to 2018, and LA must request/renew the de-delegated services for 2019-2020. The LA proposes to consult with schools on the proposed de-delegated services and charges for 2019-20:

       A) Central Services - £66.00 per pupil (no change from 18-19)
       B) Trade Union Support - £1.40 (an increase of 20p per pupil from 18-19)
       C) Free Schools Meals Support - £0.60 per pupil (an increase of 5p from 18-19)

4.3   Only maintained School Forum members can vote on de-delegated services. Primary and secondary members must decide separately if the service should be de-delegated and will apply to all maintained mainstream schools. Funding for these services will be top sliced from the formula before school budgets are issued.

4.4   **The Schools' Forum is asked to support the Council's request to consult with schools on the proposed de-delegated services and charges for 2019-20 as outlined in section 4.2**

5.   Pupil Variation Numbers – Growth Fund

5.1   The funding formula for each school or academy is based on the characteristics from the October census. LA's can request approval to vary the pupil numbers for a specific school(s) where:

      a) There has been/will be a reorganisation.
      b) A school has changed/will be changing its age range either by adding or losing year

groups.
c) A temporary shortage of pupils.
d) New Schools/academies.
These are known as PAN increases.

5.2 A report will be presented to the Schools' Forum in October explaining and requesting the PAN increases required for 2018-19. For the purposes of the consultation, Medway propose to use the same as 2018-19 which are 685 new pupils and highlighted in blue in table 2 below.

School	Year of Support	Academy	Maximum Pupil Increase Per Class	R	1	2	3	4		6	Total Pupils	Total Pupils
Napier Primary Academy	6 of 7	Y	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	-	180	180.0
Wainscott Primary School	6 of 7	N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	-	180	105.0
Delce Junior Academy (YR R)	2 of 3	Y	30	30	30	30	-	-	-	-	90	90.0
Brompton Westbrook Primary Academy	5 of 7	Y	15	15	15	15	15	15	-	-	75	75.0
Saxon Way Primary Academy	5 of 7	Y	30	30	30	30	30	30	-	-	150	150.0
Cedar Primary School	4 of 7	Y	15	15	15	15	15	-	-	-	60	60.0
Cuxton Junior Academy	4 of 4	Y	10	-	-		10	10	10	10	40	40.0
New Horizons Primary Academy	4 of 7	Y	30	90	90	90	90	90	60	60	570	570.0
Hundred of Hoo Academy - Primary Phase	4 of 7	Y	30	30	30	30	30	-	-	-	120	120.0
Bligh Federation	2 of 7	Y	30	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	60	60.0
Cliffe Woods	2 of 4	Y	15	15	15		10	15	-	-	55	55.0
Woodlands Academy	4 of 7	Y	30	30	30	30	30	-	-	-	120	120.0
Halling	1 of 7	N	20	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	11.7
Riverside	1 of 7	Y	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	30.0
St Mary's Island	1 of 7	N	60	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	35.0
Holcombe (Chatham)	1 of 5	Y	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	30.0
Sir Joseph Williamson (Rochester)	1 of 5	Y	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	30.0
Rainham Mark (Rainham)	1 of 5	Y	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	30.0
A school or schools in the Chatham area	1 of 7	N	120	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	70.0
				665	345	300	290	220	130	70	2,020	1,862

5.3 The Schools' Forum is asked to support the Council's request to consult with schools/academies using the same PAN increases 2018-19 as outlined in section 5.2.

6. School and Academy Consultation

6.1 The LA has to consult with it schools, academies and free schools before it can introduce changes to its local funding formula.

6.2 Appendix 2 contains an explanation of the 10 funding factors used in Medway Local 2018-19 Schools and Academies Funding Formula, with the unit costs for each shown in appendix 3.

6.3 Appendix 4 contains the funding factors and unit costs proposed for the 2019-20 consultation. Medway are processing the following changes to our local formula to bring it in line with the national funding formula unit costs:

- Reduce the Primary Basic entitlement to £2,847 (A reduction of £0.59 per pupil)
- Reduce the Secondary KS3 Basic to £3,863 (A reduction of £287.36 per pupil)
- Increase the Secondary KS4 Basic to £4,386 (An increase of £235.64 per pupil)
- Reduce the primary FSM to £440 (a reduction of £210 per pupil)
- Increase the primary FSME6 to £540 (an increase of £190 per pupil)
- Increase the secondary FSME6 to £785 (an increase of £285 per pupil)
- Reduce IDACI banding A, B &C to match national.
- Increase both mobility funding to £150 (an increase of £60 per pupil)
- Reduce the primary low prior attainment to £1,022 (a reduction of £28 per pupil)
- Reduce the lump sum to £110,000 (a reduction of £26,400)

6.4 The government has set the MFG of between - 1.5% to + 0.5%; and for the past few years the Schools' Forum have agreed to fund this by capping gains per pupil at 3% per year. **Medway propose to continue to cap school gains at 6% (compared to 2017/18) and set a +0.5% MFG for 2019-2020 but schools and academies will be asked for their views as part of the consultation.**

6.5 The maximum sparsity funding a school can be awarded is £25,000 for Primary and £65,000 for secondary. In September 2014, the Schools' Forum approved the use of the tapering lump method up to a maximum of £100,000. This approach was ratified in the September 2017 for 2018-19.

6.6 The Schools' Forum must decide again what approach and the value of the Sparsity funding in 2019-20. **Medway propose to use the same lump method and lump sum as 2018-19.**

6.7 A maximum lump sum of £175,000 can be allocated to each school/academy as part of the formula. **Medway propose to use an initial allocation of £110,000**, however the lump sum is subject to change, if the final funding formula is unaffordable after the October 2018 school census is published, **Medway propose to increase/reduce the lump sum so it is affordable. This** is the same processes agreed in previous years.

6.8 Other Key information the formula must provide/allow for:
- All schools will receive a 1% increase in per pupil funding compared to 2017-18.
- Primary minimum funding per pupil will increase to £3,500 per pupil.
- Secondary minimum funding per pupil will increase to £4,800 per pupil.

6.8 **The Schools' Forum is asked to support the Council's proposals on:**

- **The consultation with schools and academies as outlined in section 6.3**
- **The cap on schools gains? If so what percentage as outlined in section 6.4**
- **The approach and value of the 2018-19 Sparsity Funding outlined in section 6.5**
- **To initial lump sum allocation of £112,000 – subject to change under each scenario.**

7. Schools' Forum Actions and Recommendations

7.1 The Schools' Forum are asked to:

A. **APPROVE** the transfer of funding from the schools block to the high needs block for 2019-20.
B. **APPROVE** the adoption of the proposed timetable in 2.1 and Appendix 1**.**
C. **Note** the 2019-20 Provisional SB DSG allocation.
D. **SUPPORT** the Council's request to consult with schools on the proposed de-delegated services and charges for 2019-20 as outlined in section 4.
E. **SUPPORT** the Council's request to consult with schools using the same PAN increases 2019-20 as outlined in section 5subject to the October report.
F. **SUPPORT** the Council's proposals on the consultation with schools and academies as outlined in section 6
G. **NOTE** and **COMMENT** on this report.

8. Next Steps

8.1 Medway will now consult with all Schools and Academies in Medway about the options outlined in this report and will report back to the Schools' Forum.

8.2 An e-mail will be sent to all head teachers, governors and school finance officers for both Schools and Academies inviting them to offer a consultation response. The consultation will be discussed at the School bursar meetings in September.

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School/Academy Funding Formula 2019-20 Timetable

July 2018	Information from DFE to LA
Sept 2018	High needs funding operational guide from the ESFA 2019 to 2020 growth allocations will be provided to local authorities
11 Sep 2018	Schools Forum Meeting
17 Sept 2018	LA to model & consult with schools/academies for 3 weeks
6 Oct 2018	Deadline for schools/academies consultation
4 Oct 2018	Census Day
4 Oct 2018	Schools Forum Meeting – Schools Forum & LA to decide & approve Provisional 19-20 funding formula. **Propose to move this back one week.**
Oct/Nov 2018	DFE/LA (Management Information Team) validation of School Census
20 Nov 2018	Deadline for submitting final exception EFA changes requests.
28 Nov 2018	School Census Data closed by DFE
Mid-Dec 2018	School Census Data available DFE issues Funding Formula Return (APT) to LAs, with School Census (Oct.17) data LA able to estimate Schools Block – Dedicated Schools Grant allocation for 19-20
11 Jan 2019	**Schools Forum Meeting – Schools Forum & LA to decide & approve Final 19-20 funding formula.**
21 Jan 2019	Funding Formula Return (APT) to be submitted to EFA
5 Feb 2019	Council Cabinet Approval for Final 2019-20 funding formula
28 Feb 2019	Schools to be informed of Schools Block allocation 19-20 by LA
29 Mar 2019	EFA informs academies of GAG.

Medway 2018-2019 Local Funding Formula

a)   Basic Entitlement

A compulsory factor which assigns funding according to the age-weighted pupil unit (AUPW) multiplied by a unit per pupil cost to each individual school or academy based on the October census. There may be different funding rates for key stage 3 and 4 as well as primary age pupils.

b)   Deprivation

A compulsory factor which assigns funding to pupils from deprived areas. LA's can either use the free schools meals indicator and/or the income deprivation affecting children Index (IDACI); Medway use both. Different funding rates can be attached to each level of the IDACI system and the funding rates can be different for primary and secondary.

c)   Prior Attainment

This is an optional factor which acts as a proxy indicator for low level, high incidence special educational needs. Funding is applied for primary pupils not achieving the expected level of development within the early years foundation stage (EYFSP) and for secondary pupils not reaching L4 at KS2 in either English or maths.

d)   English as another Language

This is an optional factor where EAL pupils my attract funding for up to 3 years after they enter the school system.

e)   Pupil Mobility

This is an optional factor which measures the pupils who entered a school during the last 3 years who did not start in August, September or January if a reception class. There is a10% threshold therefore if a school/academy has a 12% mobility factor then 2% (12% - 10%) of the school/academy pupils would attract mobility funding.

f)   Sparsity

This is an optional factor. In order to qualify for this funding the school or academy must meet two criteria; first they are located in an area where pupils would have to travel significant distance to the nearest school; and second, they are small schools.

Primary schools/academies must have a sparsity distance greater than 2 miles and an average year group of less than 21.4; Secondary school/academies must have a sparsity distance greater than 3 miles and an average year group of less than 120; All through school/academies must have a sparsity distance greater than 2 miles and an average year group of less than 62.5.
The maximum amount which can be awarded to a school or academy is £100,000. In the September 2017 school forum meeting, the schools forum agreed to a maximum of £100,000 and to the tapping method.

g)   Lump Sum

This is an optional factor where each school will receive a maximum amount up to £175,000. The lump sum amounts may be different for primary and secondary schools or academies.

h) Split Sites

This is an optional factor which designed to help support schools which are located on separate sites. Schools sharing facilities, federated schools and schools with remote sixth forms are NOT eligible for split site funding.

i) Rates

This is an optional factor which funds a school or academy based on their estimated rates bills for the coming year. Medway also adjust the rates funding to account for any over or under funding of rates from the previous years when the rates bills are known.

j) Exceptional Premises Factors

This is an optional factor which LA's can apply to the EFA to use exceptional factors relating to premises and must be more than 1% of the schools budget and applies to fewer than 5% of Medway schools and academies.

In Medway we have two EFA approved exceptional factors, firstly listed building and secondly Amalgamated Schools/academies.

Local Funding Formula 2018-19

Funding Factors	Description	Primary per pupil	Secondary per pupil
Basic Entitlement	Primary (Years R-6)	2,847.59	-
	Secondary KS3 (Years 7 - 9)	-	4,150.36
	Secondary - KS4 (Years 10 - 11)	-	4,150.36
Deprivation	FSM	650	440
	FSM6	350	500
	IDACI Band F	200	290
	IDACI Band E	240	390
	IDACI Band D	360	515
	IDACI Band C	540	610
	IDACI Band B	570	650
	IDACI Band A	775	860
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	EAL 3	515	1,385
Mobility	Pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates	90	90
Prior attainment	Low Attainment % new EFSP - 38.4%	1,050	-
	Secondary low attainment (year 7) - 58.5%	-	1,550
	Secondary low attainment (year 8) - 48.2%	-	1,550
	Secondary low attainment (years 9 to 11)	-	1,550
Lump Sum	Lump Sum	136,400	136,400
Sparsity	Sparsity	25,000	65,000

Proposed Local Funding Formula 2019-20

Funding Factors	Description	Primary per pupil	Secondary per pupil
	Primary (Years R-6)	2,847	-
	Secondary KS3 (Years 7 - 9)	-	3,863
Basic Entitlement	Secondary - KS4 (Years 10 - 11)	-	4,386
	FSM	440	440
	FSM6	540	785
	IDACI Band F	200	290
	IDACI Band E	240	390
	IDACI Band D	360	515
	IDACI Band C	390	560
	IDACI Band B	420	600
Deprivation	IDACI Band A	575	810
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	EAL 3	515	1,385
Mobility	Pupils starting school outside of normal entry dates	150	150
	Low Attainment % new EFSP - 38.4%	1,022	-
	Secondary low attainment (year 7) - 58.5%	-	1,550
	Secondary low attainment (year 8) - 48.2%	-	1,550
Prior attainment	Secondary low attainment (years 9 to 11)	-	1,550
Lump Sum	Lump Sum	110,000	110,000
Sparsity	Sparsity	25,000	65,000.00

1.   Back ground

1.1   The Schools Forum operational and good practice guide 2017 is a guide is designed to provide local authority officers and it Schools Forum elected members with advice and information on good practice in relation to the operation of Schools Forums.

2.   School Forum Powers

2.1   Schools Forums generally have a consultative role. However, there are key situations in which they have decision making powers, which are:

- De-delegation from mainstream maintained schools for services provided centrally.

- To create a fund for pupil growth to support the local authority's duty for place planning and agree the criteria for accessing this fund – Growth Fund.

- To create a fund for falling rolls for good or outstanding schools if the schools' surplus capacity is likely to be needed within the next three years to meet rising pupil numbers and agree the criteria for accessing this fund.

- Authorize a reduction in school budgets to fund a deficit arising in central expenditure, or from de-delegated services, that is to be carried forward from a previous funding period.

- Agreeing other centrally retained budgets.

- Funding for central early years expenditure, which may include funding for checking eligibility of pupils for an early years place, the early years pupil premium and/or free school meals

2.2   In the 2018 and 2019 the schools block is ring-fenced. Local authorities require Schools Forum approval in order to move up to 0.5% from the schools block to other blocks such as the high needs block. This continues in 2019-2020.

2.3   In all cases, the local authority can appeal to the Secretary of State if the Schools Forum rejects its proposals. Local authorities must have discussed with the Schools Forum any proposals that they intend to put to the Secretary of State.

2.4   Regulations state that the local authority must consult with the Schools Forum annually in connection with the following:

- Amendments to the school funding formula.

- Arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs. In particular the places to be commissioned by the local authority and the arrangements for paying top-up funding.

- Arrangements for the use of pupil referral units and the education of children other than at school. In particular the places to be commissioned by the local authority and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding.

- Arrangements for early year's provision.

- Administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the local authority.

2.5   There is no specific definition of these consultation requirements and each local authority will decide on the appropriate level of detail it needs to generate a sufficiently informed response from Schools Forum.

2.6   The Schools Forum has the responsibility of informing the governing bodies of all schools maintained by the local authority of the results of any consultations carried out by the local authority relating to the issues in paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 above.

2.7   Schools Forums have an important role to play in approving certain proposals from their local authority and are therefore involved in the decision making process. As a result, Schools Forums are required to be open to the public. Furthermore, papers, agendas and minutes must be publicly available well in advance of each meeting. It's good practice that notification that the Schools Forum is a public meeting is included on the website and papers are published at least a week in advance. Local authorities should ensure that the websites are accessible and easy to find.

3.   Membership

3.1 The Schools Forums Regulations provides a framework for the appointment of members, but allows a considerable degree of discretion to accommodate local priorities and practice.

3.2 There is no maximum or minimum size of a Schools Forum but the ESFA advise local authorities to have full representation for various types of schools within its boundaries. However, care should be taken to keep the Schools Forum to a reasonable and workable size.

3.3 There are four types of members: schools members, academies members, non-school members and LA members. Schools and academies members together must number at least two-thirds (Medway 11 School / 7 non-school) of the total membership.

3.4 The balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category. Based on the October 2017 censuses 73% of mainstream children were educated in academies. 5 of the 11 school members are academy reps (45%) but Medway maintained schools must have a special, PRU rep on the board. If these posts are removed then academies would have 5 of the 9 school reps totalling 55%.

3.5 The structure of forum should be regularly reviewed, and the ESFA suggest good practice is to review the membership as a standing agenda item at each meeting. Medway last reviewed the membership in 2015.

3.6 Academies members must represent mainstream academies, special academies and alternative provision academies. There is no requirement for academy members to represent specific primary and secondary phases, but it may be encouraged to ensure representation remains broadly proportionate to pupil numbers.

3.7 The term of office (Medway 3 years) for each schools member and academies member should be stipulated by the local authority at the time of appointment. At the end of September the schools and academies head teacher members are due for re-election.

3.8 All schools and academies must be informed, within a month of the appointment of any new member including their name and the area they represent.

3.9 A member ceases to be a member when their term of office (3 years) comes to an end, if they resign, or no longer occupy the office they became eligible for election in. **Do we have any members who need to resign?** For example;

- a secondary schools member must stand down if their school converts to an academy.

- a schools member representing community primary school governors who is no longer a governor of a community primary school.

3.10 Medway's Schools Forum membership is as follows:

Position	Member	Voting/Non Voting
Primary maintained headteacher	Steve Geary	Schools
Primary maintained headteacher	Karen Norman	Schools
Primary academy headteacher	Karen White (Vice chair)	Academies
Secondary academy head teacher	Kim Gunn	Academies
Special academy head or governor	Caron Johnson	Academies
Special maintained head or governor	Karen Joy	Schools
Governor	Ian Chappell	Academies
Governor	Barbara Fincham	Schools
Governor	Peter Martin (Chair)	Academies
Governor	Clive Mailing	Schools
Early Years representative	Suzanne Piggott	Non School
PRU representative	Karen Bennett	School
16-19 provider representative	*Vacancy*	Non School
C of E diocese representative	Vacancy	Non School
RC diocese representative	Kathy Sexton	Non School
Teaching associations representative	Julia Harris	Non School
LA Officer – Finance	Maria Beany	LA
LA Officer – School Improvement	David Watkins	LA
LA Director of Children's Services	Ian Sutherland	LA
LA Elected School Members have an open invitation.		LA

3.11 As both the C of E diocese and RC diocese representatives are head teachers as well as maintained schools, for the purposes of voting on de-delegations, reserves and the funding formula they are treated as schools members.

3.12 Please note Suzanne Piggott the early years member has not attended a meeting for over a year and **Medway propose to remove her from this office and recruit a new representative.**

3.13 The 16-19 provider and the C of E diocese membership posts are vacant and **Medway would recommend contacting these areas to recruit new representative.**

4. **Procedures**

4.1 **Quorum:** a meeting is only quorate if 40% (7 for Medway) of the current membership excluding vacancies and observers is present. If a meeting is inquorate it can proceed but it cannot legally take decisions but can give views to the local authority.

4.2 **Election of a chair**: if the position of chair falls vacant the Schools Forum must decide how long the term of office of the next chair will be. This can be for any period, but the Schools Forum should consider carefully whether a period exceeding two years is sensible. The Schools Forum must elect a chair from amongst its own members but it can't be an elected member or officer of the local authority.

4.3 It's not legal for the chair to take a decision on behalf of the Schools Forum, no matter how urgent. However, a Schools Forum may wish to put in place a procedure for the chair to give the local authority a view on an urgent issue.

4.4 Schools Forums can also appoint to a position of vice chair to provide cover if the chair is absent or the post vacant and again appoint a term of office.

4.5 **Voting procedures:** A Schools Forum may determine its own voting procedures save that voting on:

- the funding formula is limited to schools members, academies members and PVI representatives.

- de-delegation is limited to the specific primary and secondary phase of maintained schools members.

- retaining funding for statutory duties relating to maintained schools only is limited to maintained primary, secondary, special and PRU members

- decisions are made on a simple majority or the threshold to be set if higher.

4.6 **Substitutes:** the local authority may make arrangements to enable substitutes to attend and vote (where appropriate) at Schools Forum meetings. This applies to schools members, academies members and non-schools members as well if agreed in advance.

4.7 **Timing:** Schools Forums must meet at least four times a year.

4.8 Where the regulations make no provision on a procedural matter, local discretion should be exercised. It's for the local authority to decide how far it wishes to

establish rules for the Schools Forum to follow, in the form of standing orders. While it's entitled to do so, it's of course good practice to allow the Schools Forum to set its own rules so far as possible.

5.   Responsibilities of schools and their representatives

5.1   Schools can expect to have their views canvassed and to receive feedback from their representatives.

5.2   Schools Forum members have a responsibility to represent the interests of their peer groups rather than the interests of their own individual school or trust.

5.3   Schools staff and governors should make sure that the representatives they choose are competent to act as their advocates. They should also ensure that they are aware of schools Forum business and make their views known about decisions affecting schools' finance.

6.   **Proposals for new Schools Forum membership**

6.1   The School Forum membership was last received in 2015 and since then several maintained schools have converted to academy status, with over 73% of pupils now being educated in academies, whilst only 55% of the school membership relates to academies.

6.2   Just under two thirds of the School Forum membership relate to schools with one third being non-schools excluding LA members who have no voting rights.

6.3   Therefore to ensure the school/non schools ratio and to increase the percentage of academy members on the forum, **Medway recommend increasing the academies membership by 1 (2 at the most) and include a member for academy trusts.**

6.4   All the Headteacher School Forum members term of office expire at the end of September. As the Schools Forum is expected to continue for the next 2-3 years **Medway recommend holding elections for all new Forum Headteacher members from October on the same ratios as the current structure see table 1 below.**

To be elected	2 Primary maintained Headteacher
Current members	Steve Geary and Karen Norman
Proposal	To be elected by nominations put forward by MELA.

To be elected	1 Special and 1 PRU maintained Headteacher
Current members	Karen Joy and Karen Bennett
Proposal	To be elected by appointment put forward by MELA.

To be elected	3 Headteacher covering, Primary, Secondary and special.
Current members	Karen White, Kim Gunn, Caron Johnson
Proposal	To be elected by nominations put forward by academies.
Does not include proposed new post.	

6.5 The local authority can help organise the elections and run the process, its up to the schools themselves to put forward nominations and to vote and agree there representatives.

7. Action for the Schools Forum

7.1 The Schools' Forum are asked to:

A. **NOTE** and **COMMENT** on this report.
B. **APPROVE** the removal of the Early Years from post as per section 3.12.
C. **APPROVE** the recruitment to the three vacant posts as per section 3.12 and 3.13.
D. **APPROVE** the increase in Academy membership by 1 as per section 6.3.
E. **APPROVE** holding elections for all Headteacher memberships as per section 6.4.

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Background Papers:

Schools Forums operational and good practice guide - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2015