

NORTH YORKSHIRE SCHOOLS FORUM

Date of meeting:	Thursday 22 January 2026 (via Teams)
Title of report:	Minutes of the North Yorkshire Schools Forum
Type of report: Delete as required	For information only
Executive summary: Including reason for submission	The minutes of the previous meeting of the North Yorkshire Schools Forum are presented for approval.
Budget / Risk implications:	N/A
Recommendations:	The minutes are approved as an accurate record.
Voting requirements:	N/A
Appendices: To be attached	N/A
Report originator and contact details:	Andrea Mansfield- Clerk to The Schools Forum Tel: 01609 532609 E-mail: andrea.mansfield@northyorks.gov.uk
Presenting officer: If not the originator	N/A

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2026**

PRESENT:

Chair:	Ian Yapp
Primary Headteachers:	Karen O Donnell
Secondary Headteachers:	Julie Polley
Nursery headteacher:	Jonelle Yeoman
Special Headteacher:	Ann-Marie Ellis Michelle Hockham
Pupil Referral Service:	Gareth Morton
Academies:	Michelle Hockham Melissa Adderley David Barber Claire Hurworth Louise Sagar Simon Smith Jon Watson Kerry Young Rebecca Broadbent
Governors:	Ray Wells, Becki Bulmer
Early Years Providers PVI:	Emily Freeman
16-19 Providers:	Simon Gummerson
Diocesan Representatives:	Mari Palmer
Trade Unions:	Michelle Jones, Stephen Jennings
Observers:	Cllr Annabel Wilkinson Cllr Janet Sanderson
In Attendance:	Howard Emmett, El Mayhew, Amanda Fielding, Louise Wilson, Sally Dunn, Andrea Mansfield (LSO Minute Taker)

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Apologies:	Martin Macaulay -RC Diocese Mel Hutchinson Helen Williams Ian Mottram Sam Williams Alison Kaye
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1295: WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1296: MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Circulated: A list of the current membership:

The current 8 vacancies were outlined:

Primary LA (Head) (1) Primary LA (Gov) (2), Secondary LA (Head) (1), Academy (4).

Quorum is 40% of members (11).

NOTED:

There are currently four Academy vacancies, for which six nominations have been received. An election process will be arranged and conducted in accordance with Schools Forum guidelines. Each of the 31 Academy trusts will be allocated one vote to elect four representatives. It is proposed that the election will be concluded by the March meeting, enabling the newly appointed members to join at that session.

The current Chair's term ends in May 2026. The process to nominate a current Schools Forum member as the new Chair will begin on 26 January 2026. All current Forum members will receive information about the nomination process, which will be carried out in line with the Schools Forum constitution and guidelines. The process will be completed in time for a handover to the new Chair at the end of the March meeting.

1297: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED: that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 November 2025 be agreed as an accurate record

1298: MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

1299: NOTIFICATION OF OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no notifications of other urgent business for consideration.

1300: Overall DSG and Schools Block 2026-27 - Item 2.1

CONSIDERED: A report providing information regarding the overall DSG allocation and planned expenditure on the Schools Block Budget in 2026-27, following the consideration of proposals regarding its distribution at the Schools Forum meeting in November 2025 and formal agreement by the Council's Executive in January 2026.

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RECOMMENDATIONS: That the North Yorkshire Schools Forum notes and approves the contents of this paper

NOTED:**Capping, Scaling, and Use of Reserves**

Members revisited the January discussion regarding avoiding capping and scaling through the use of reserves. Officers confirmed that applying reserves and growth funding reduces the overall shortfall in the schools budget.

Notional SEND Funding

Concerns were raised about the distribution of notional SEND funding, as allocations do not reflect the differing numbers of pupils with EHCPs across schools. Schools with higher numbers of EHCPs face greater costs due to the £6,000 notional contribution required per pupil. Officers noted that:

- Funding must follow the national and local formulas.
- Notional SEND amounts are indicative and do not change a school's total funding.
- Decisions on spending sit with individual schools.

It was acknowledged that the current system has limitations, and future reforms are awaited through national policy developments.

Role of the Schools Forum

The Chair highlighted the Forum's responsibility to ensure best use of funding and to continue raising concerns externally—particularly around funding inadequacy and national inconsistencies.

High Needs Deficit Forecast

A member queried the projected £11m deficit for 2026/27. Officers confirmed the deficit remains on an upward trajectory. The forecast includes planned mitigations, which aim to strengthen mainstream inclusivity and reduce movement to specialist provision.

Update from the High Needs Funding (HNF) Subgroup

- 2026/27 High Needs Allocation: Cash-flat compared to 2025/26. The DfE's reported increase reflects rolled-in grants rather than new funding.
- Capital Funding: The DfE has offered either continuation of Free Special School bids or a lump-sum capital option. North Yorkshire is reviewing the approach for the planned Northallerton school.

Falling Rolls

Members asked about pupil roll trends. Officers confirmed reductions across the county, though not uniformly. National figures also show declining pupil numbers, with the sharpest drops in London, rural areas, and coastal regions. North Yorkshire primary numbers have fallen from 42,766 (2017/18) to 40,999 (2024/25) (-4.13%).

National Funding Advocacy

The Chair referenced recent communications to MPs and the Secretary of State, stressing the need to continue highlighting national funding shortfalls and regional inequities. North Yorkshire remains one of the lowest-funded areas.

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Cllr Sanderson highlighted her significant concern regarding the forecasted cumulative High Needs Block deficit, which is projected to reach approximately £24 million by 31 March 2026 and potentially £40 million by March 2027 without mitigation. She noted that the scale of the deficit presents a serious financial risk to the council and emphasised the urgent need for the forthcoming national reforms outlined in the White Papers.

Cllr Sanderson stressed the importance of collective advocacy, referencing the f40 campaign, and expressed her gratitude to the Schools Forum for agreeing the recent DSG transfer.

AGREED: The North Yorkshire Schools Forum noted and approved the contents of this paper.

1301: Early Years Funding 2026-27 -Item 2.2

CONSIDERED: A report considering the following areas:

- An update on the 2026-27 Early Years Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation and changes to the DfE early years funding methodology for local authorities.
- Schools' Forum views on the funding rates to be paid to early years' providers for the funded early years entitlement for 2-year-olds of families receiving additional support, the working parent entitlement for under 2-year-olds, 2-year-olds and 3 & 4-year-olds and the universal entitlement for 3 & 4-year-olds for the 2026-27 financial year
- An update on the allocation of the supplementary funding provided for Maintained Nursery Schools for the 2026-27 financial year

RECOMMENDATIONS: The North Yorkshire Schools Forum is asked:

- i. To note the 2026-27 Early Years DSG allocation. (the early years provider funding rates were approved by CYPS Executive Members on 20 January 2026)

NOTED:

A member queried why each of the three Maintained Nursery Schools receive the same £50k lump sum despite having different pupil numbers.

Officers explained that when the funding formula was reviewed in 2023/24, it was identified that all Maintained Nursery Schools face core operational costs that do not vary with size. For this reason, a lump-sum payment—similar to the school funding formula—was considered the fairest approach.

Additional funding for 3- and 4-year-old hours, deprivation, and disability access reflects the differing needs and levels of disadvantage across each setting. This structure ensures support for nurseries working with the most deprived families and children with SEND.

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A member noted that the pass-through rate cannot be increased further at this stage, as doing so would create risks for the delivery of Early Years services. Officer shared that the DfE has not indicated any future increases to the required pass-through rate. However, they have advised that EYFS national funding formula is due for review for 2027/28, with consultation expected by summer 2026.

AGREED: The North Yorkshire Schools Forum noted the 2026-27 Early Years DSG allocation

1302: Membership of Schools Forum 2026 -Item 2.3

CONSIDERED: A report detailing the of the outcome of the annual review undertaken of the Schools Forum Constitution and to ensure that membership composition continues to reflect the make-up of schools and academies in North Yorkshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Schools Forum are asked to approve:

- a. The proposal that no change is made to the Constitution regarding the membership outlined in section 3.1
- b. The proposals detailed in section 3.2 in respect of electing representatives to the 8 vacant positions.
- c. The proposals detailed in section in section 3.3 in respect of amendments to the North Yorkshire Schools Forum Constitution

NOTED:

The wording of 11.4 within the constitution needs to be amended to allow both lead members to attend. This was agreed.

AGREED: Schools Forum agreed to the recommendations

1303: AOB

CONSIDERED: None received

1304: MEETINGS:

Thursday 19 March 2026

Thursday 21 May 2026- proposed Schools Forum Development Day -venue and timings TBC all members to be contacted to gather numbers/interest.

Thursday 24 September 2026

Thursday 19 November 2026

Thursday 10 December 2026 (provisional)



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- Item 1.3

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