

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 002309  
Date            17 May 2018

### ***Short Breaks Funding***

#### **Request:**

All council correspondence pertaining to the withdrawal of Short Breaks funding from Tettenhall Wood's After-School club. I am particularly interested in the communication to Tettenhall Wood School from The City of Wolverhampton Council with a focus of the email exchanges between Steve Morris and Tettenhall Wood School. We are only requesting the emails from Steve Morris and not from the school. This especially pertains to discussion about the withdrawal of Short Breaks funding from the school and the council's justification for this.

We would also like to access the correspondence on Short Break funding between the City of Wolverhampton Council and special schools in the area which should include (but not be limited to): Green Park; Westcroft; Pennfields; Penn Hall and Broadmeadow.

In response to your above questions, please find attached email exchanges between the commissioning officer and Tettenhall Wood School. The other special schools also received copies of the emails dated 12 December 2017, 17 April 2018 and 10 May 2018, appropriately addressed. Where other special schools were involved in an email exchange, the emails are also attached.

Please note that there has been no decision to withdraw short break funding from Tettenhall Wood School.

Funding is available for the 2018/19 financial year through an application process.

Email Correspondence between Steve Morris (Commissioning) and Special Schools.

## **Tettenhall Wood School**

On 10 May 2018, at 11:34, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Dear Colleagues

I wrote to you on 17<sup>th</sup> April with the application form for this year's schools-based short break grant application form.  
Unfortunately, the need to make a decision on the individual awards for this year's grant is now pressing. Already some providers have told us that they have suspended particular activities because of the uncertainty, even though they have been assured that there will be no overall reduction in this year's budget.  
Can I please ask for your applications on or before the **16<sup>th</sup> May**? We will not be able to consider applications made after this date because of the need to allocate budgets fairly. I look forward to your completed applications.  
Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need additional advice.

Best regards,

Steve

### **Steve Morris**

#### **Commissioning Officer**

People Directorate

First Floor, Civic Centre

St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

On 3 May 2018, at 16:38, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Dear Sarah

Thank you for the application and for the kind words. I am happy to acknowledge receipt.

We are currently waiting for another few schools; as soon as we have all the applications I will write to you to seek a discussion and a fair distribution of the budget available.

Best regards,

Steve

**Steve Morris**

**Commissioning Officer**

People Directorate

First Floor, Civic Centre

St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

**From:** Steve Morris (QAC) [<mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk>]

**Sent:** 17 April 2018 12:50

**To:** Sarah Whittington <[Sarah.Whittington@tettenhallwoodschoo.org.uk](mailto:Sarah.Whittington@tettenhallwoodschoo.org.uk)>

**Cc:** Helen Masters <[Helen.Masters@tettenhallwoodschoo.org.uk](mailto:Helen.Masters@tettenhallwoodschoo.org.uk)>

**Subject:** Schools-based Short Break Grant 2018/19 [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

Dear Ms Whittington

Please find attached a letter and application form concerning the schools-based short break funding grant for 2018/19.

I apologise for the delay in sending out this year's funding letters, and look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

**Steve Morris**

**Commissioning Officer**

People Directorate

First Floor, Civic Centre

St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)  
GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

On Thu 08/03/2018 at 12:08, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

## PROTECT

Hi Sarah

I understand your disappointment and frustration. I know that some parents use ASCs as additional respite but other schools have ASC provision as part of their basic offer. This means that the way the schools-based short break funding money is currently spent is inequitable.

We are under so much pressure to save money that almost anything non-statutory is under threat. There will be some short breaks money for schools, primarily for the holidays, but as I said it's unlikely to be quite as much as last year. The money used to come from the 'Aiming High' fund, but since that has been cut by the Government we are the only local LA to still meet even part of the original commitment.

There is a way that parents and carers can still be funded to support the ASC; if they are eligible, they can move to a direct payment they can use the money in any way they please; this comes out of a different budget and is a statutory responsibility, based on an individual assessment. It means, however, people choosing the ASC over other potential choices. Carer assessments are mandatory, and those parents/carers who have not yet had an assessment (or who want to consider a personal budget) should be encouraged to contact their social worker.

Best regards,

Steve

**Steve Morris**  
**Commissioning Officer**  
*Extension 6572*  
*Mobile: +44 7766 472959*  
Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)  
GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

**From:** Steve Morris (QAC) [<mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 05 March 2018 16:53  
**To:** Dawn Mathews  
**Subject:** RE: Short Breaks 2017/18 [PROTECT]

## PROTECT

Hi Dawn

I'm sorry I wasn't able to get back to you earlier today. The short break report that I mentioned is still in draft; a version has been seen by our director and she has instructed us to make some changes to it, so unfortunately the details are not yet nailed down.

I can tell you that there will be some funding for all the special schools 2018/9, however the amount is likely to be further reduced from the amount available in 2017/8. The whole of the current short breaks framework expires in April 2019, so we are working toward a complete overhaul of the current offer (with the exception of overnight provision, which is contracted separately).

Your phone message mentioned the after school clubs. There seems to be a general presumption that after school clubs are not what short break money should be used for, and that these should be part of the school's own offer. I am sorry that this is likely to come as a disappointment. The evidence that we have suggests that parents and carers need more support in the school holidays, so unfortunately this is likely to be a stipulation; we also need to understand which young people are benefitting from the short breaks provision, as the data seems to suggest that some young people are getting a lot of support and others very little.

I'm happy to discuss, but I thought you would like to be aware of the way things are likely to go.

Best regards,

Steve

**Steve Morris**

**Commissioning Officer**

People Directorate

First Floor, Civic Centre

St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

**From:** Steve Morris (QAC) [<mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk>]

**Sent:** 15 December 2017 09:48

**To:** Sarah Whittington

**Cc:** Dawn Mathews; Jed Edwards; Kathy Roper

**Subject:** RE: Short Breaks 2017/18

Hi Sarah

Is 10am suitable? If not I'm happy for you to set the time. I'm also happy to come to Tettenhall.

Best regards

Steve

On 14 Dec 2017, at 17:02, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Sarah

Thank you for your email.  
I would be more than happy to meet with you; would either Wednesday or Friday next week be convenient?

Best regards,

Steve

**Steve Morris**

**Commissioning Officer**

People Directorate

First Floor, Civic Centre

St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

**From:** Steve Morris (QAC) [<mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk>]

**Sent:** 12 December 2017 13:32

**To:** Tettenhall Wood General Email

**Subject:** Short Breaks 2017/18

12 December 2017

Ms Sarah Whittington  
Headteacher  
Tettenhall Wood School  
Regis Road  
Tettenhall  
Wolverhampton  
WV6 8XF

Dear Ms Whittington

**Short Breaks Funding 2017-18**

My colleague Richard Hodgens wrote to you in April 2017 to confirm the 2017-18 allocation of short break funding. Richard has now moved on, and I have been appointed as the new commissioner with responsibility for short breaks. I would like to confirm the arrangements for 2017/8 funding. The amount that has been allocated to Tettenhall Wood School is £13000.

I would be very grateful if you could ensure that any outstanding claims against the budget and monitoring returns are submitted at your earliest opportunity, and in any event before the end of February. Please note that it is not possible to pay claims made after the end of the financial year, and the finance team needs some time to process the claims and (in the worst case scenario) resolve any issues.

We would like to start a dialogue with you about the future of the short breaks service delivered by the school in 2018/19; there are a number of reasons for changing the way in which the service is designed, but the most important is that parents and carers tell us that the current services do not adequately meet the need. There is also evidence that the money is spread unevenly across the city, that certain groups of young people with needs are unable to access support easily, and that the purpose and amounts of parental contributions are also widely variable across different provisions. We need to make decisions quickly so that you know what the budget is for the Easter and Summer holiday periods. I am more than happy to meet with you to understand the issues.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Steve Morris  
Commissioning Officer  
Commissioning Team, People Directorate  
Direct: 01902 556572  
Email:

DISCLAIMER: This email and any enclosures are intended solely for the use of the named recipient. If this email has a protective marking of PROTECT or RESTRICT in its title or contents, the information within must be subject to appropriate safeguards to protect against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss or destruction or damage. PROTECT and RESTRICTED information should only be further shared where there is a legitimate need. If you are not the intended recipient, or responsible for delivering it to the intended recipient, you may not copy, disclose, distribute or use it without the authorisation of City of Wolverhampton Council. If you have received this email in error please notify us by email to [postmaster@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:postmaster@wolverhampton.gov.uk) and then delete it and any attachments accompanying it. Please note that City of Wolverhampton Council do not guarantee that this message or attachments are virus free or reach you in their original form and accept no liability arising from this. Any views or opinions expressed within this email are those of the writer and may not necessarily reflect those of City of Wolverhampton Council. No contractual commitment is intended to arise from this email or attachments.

---

---

**Green Park School, Northern House School, Westcroft School**

On 17 May 2018, at 13:32, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Dear Headteacher

I wrote to you by email on 17<sup>th</sup> April and again on 10<sup>th</sup> May to ask you to make application for the 2018/9 Schools-Based Short Break grants. I asked you to submit your application by 16<sup>th</sup> May. That deadline has now passed. It is possible that either your application has been delayed or that it is incomplete; if you can get the financial details (i.e. how much you need) and basic details of how you are going to use the grant to me by **5PM TODAY** we will still be able to consider the application.

Unfortunately, if we do not receive the application in time, it will not be possible to submit it to the grant assessment panel, and the school will not be allocated any funding.

I have attached the application form in case it has gone astray.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can assist you further.

Steve Morris (QAC)  
Commissioning Officer  
Tel. Office: 01902 556572  
Tel. Mobile: 07766 472959

[E-mail: Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)  
City of Wolverhampton Council

---

---

**Green Park School**

On 21 December 2017 at 16:58, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Amy

Thanks for this, I'm very happy to come and discuss short breaks – at the moment I can make anytime w/c 8<sup>th</sup> January except Wednesday or anytime w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> January except Friday.

At the moment, though, I'm not in a position to discuss funding in any detail; I'm new to the role and I need to understand what is on offer, how it fits with other provision and what's needed. I can't make any promises or decisions at this stage.



Best regards,

Steve

**Steve Morris**

**Commissioning Officer**

People Directorate

First Floor, Civic Centre

St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

On 8 January 2018, at 10:36, Steve Morris (QAC)

<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Amy

11.30 on 23<sup>rd</sup> is fine; I look forward to meeting you.

Best regards,

Steve

**Steve Morris**

**Commissioning Officer**

People Directorate

First Floor, Civic Centre

St Peter's Square

Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

On 14 January 2018, at 14:46, Steve Morris (QAC)

<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Amy

I was very sorry to miss our meeting yesterday. It was entirely my fault. I had managed to swap two different schools! It was quite a surprise to the other headmistress when I turned up there instead.

If you are still willing to talk to me, I would more than happily reschedule our meeting.

Humble apologies.

Steve

---

---

**Penn Hall School**

On 19 January 2018, at 14:18, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Fiona

Thank you for your email.

I would be more than happy to come to Penn Hall on 30<sup>th</sup> January.

Best regards,

Steve

On 30 January 2018, at 16:38, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Fiona

I'm very sorry to have missed the meeting this morning. I think my calendar must have suffered a complete melt-down when IT rebuilt our systems.

According to my records, Penn Hall has so far claimed £14,000 of a budget of £21,603. Claiming the remaining amount (£7,603) was one of the things that I wanted to talk to you about, as well, of course, as the offer for next year.

As you probably know, the short breaks budget is under some strain, and Penn Hall was the largest single beneficiary school last year. It is quite likely that there will be a further cut in the budget this year (2018/19). We want to make sure that the money that goes to schools supports real short breaks for parents/carers, so it maximises the number of hours that parents can get some respite. My previous colleague Richard did the work on this, so I've inherited his conclusions; he believed that what we don't necessarily want to do is fund school trips or after school clubs in term time. Parents tell us that they want to prioritise breaks in the holidays when schools are closed. I know I've been more than a little chaotic but I would still like to speak to you about this at some point if you would still like to speak to me.

Best regards (and again, apologies)

Steve

**Steve Morris**  
**Commissioning Officer**  
People Directorate  
First Floor, Civic Centre  
St Peter's Square  
Wolverhampton

WV1 1SH

Telephone (01902) 55 6572

Mobile: +44 7766 472959

Email: [steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:steve.morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

GCSX email: [Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gcsx.gov.uk)

On 6 February 2018, at 14:47, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Fiona

Thank you for finding some more time for me. I look forward to seeing you on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Best regards

Steve

On 22 March 2018, at 11:49, Steve Morris (QAC)  
<[Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Morris1@wolverhampton.gov.uk)> wrote:

Hi Peter

Thank you for this.

The balance of funding is claimed by emailing Clare Darkes (above) with a breakdown of costs – Clare will then process the costs and put the amount through to Lynne for transfer. I've attached the invoice that you sent me just in case it got lost in the system. I think Clare may have asked you for a slightly more detailed breakdown of the costs rather than just a total figure, so if that's possible we can move towards transferring the remainder of the budget across.

I can't tell you too much about the future yet. Those decisions are made above my pay grade. I do understand that you need to make decisions now – you're not the only school chasing me for information – but until there is a decision I can't comment much further, except to say that there will almost certainly be a budget, it is not likely to be increased, and after schools clubs are likely to be ineligible for support.

I'm sorry I can't be more helpful. I'll be in touch as soon as I know more.

Best regards,

Steve

---

---

**Northern House School**

No additional correspondence

---

---

**Pennfields School**

No additional correspondence

---

---

**Westcroft School**

No additional correspondence