

Schools Forum

17 March 2022

Schools Forum Elections

Recommendations

The Schools Forum is recommended to:

- 1) Agree the proposed Schools Forum membership, as set out in paragraph 3.1.
- 2) Agree the suggested timetable for the elections to the Schools Forum for 2022/23, as set out in paragraph 5.1.
- 3) Agree that the Local Authority facilitates the elections on behalf of the academy representatives.
- 4) Agree that the Schools Forum terms of reference and the summary of the key roles, attached as Appendices A and B should be circulated as part of the nominations process
- 5) Agree the Schools Forum Terms of Reference (Appendix A to this report)

1. Introduction

1.1 The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has issued guidance on the required structure of Schools Forums. In summary the main requirements are:

- All types of school must be represented on the Schools Forum.
- Schools and academies members together must number at least two thirds of the total membership
- There must be a proportionate split between those representing primary and secondary pupil numbers and between academy and maintained schools.
- The Forum must have a representative of the 16-19 Providers and the PVI sector and before considering other groups must consider diocesan representation.

1.2 The Schools Forum Terms of Reference provide further detail on how the requirements will be administered locally. These include:

- Membership from maintained schools and academies would as far as possible be split between head teachers (or Senior Leadership representative) and governors.
- The term of membership will be 2 years for head teachers and governors from all schools.

2. Current Schools Forum Membership

2.1. Current membership of the Schools Forum is as follows:

Sector	No of school forum reps 2021/22
Primary Maintained	10
Secondary Maintained	1
Primary Academy	0
Secondary Academy	5
Special Schools	2
Maintained nursery school	1
Schools Sub Total	19
16-19 Partnership	0
PVI	2
Church of England Diocese	1
Catholic Archdiocese	0
Teachers Union	1
Alternative Provision	0
Total Membership	23

2.1 For information, at the last elections, we had no Primary Academy Schools Forum nominations and as such in order to represent the sector, the Primary Maintained Schools Forum Members were adjusted accordingly. We will endeavour to obtain Primary Academy Schools Forum Members through this election.

3. Proposed Schools Membership

3.1 The proposed Schools membership of the Schools Forum is set out in the table below. It has been drawn up to using a similar total number of Schools members.

Sector	No of pupils Census Oct 2021	% of pupils	No of school forum reps	Of which Heads (or reps)	Of which Governors
Primary Maintained	30,343	36%	6	3	3
Secondary Maintained	1,108	1%	1	1 headteacher or governor	
Primary Academy	15,825	19%	3	1 or 2	1 or 2
Secondary Academy	36,472	44%	7	3 or 4	3 or 4
Special Schools Maintained			1	1 head teacher or governor	
Special Schools Academy			1	1 headteacher or governor	
Maintained Nursey School			1	1 headteacher or governor	
TOTAL			20		

3.2 In March 2021 the ESFA updated the document “Schools Forum: Operational and Good Practice Guide”. It states that academy representation does not need to be sector specific (ie primary and secondary specific). Therefore, nomination and voting of academy members will not be sector specific, but academies are asked to consider the sector split when voting.

4. Non-Schools Membership

4.1 Non Schools members are selected by the local authority, as follows:

Sector	No of school forum reps 2021/22
16-19 Partnership	1
PVI	2
Church of England Diocese	1
Catholic Archdiocese	1
Teachers Union	1
Alternative Provision	1

5. Election Timetable

5.1 The proposed election timetable is as follows

Friday 24 March	Nomination forms circulated to all maintained and academy schools
Friday 13 May	Deadline for submission of nominations
Friday 20 May	Distribution of election forms to all mainstream maintained schools and academies
Friday 27 May	Voting deadline and closure of elections process
Friday 10 June	2022-24 Membership finalised
24 June 2022	Schools Forum meeting with new Membership

5.2 Although the ESFA guidance suggests that Academy Trusts should agree between themselves who the Schools Forum representatives should be, there is no established structure for this to take place. As such, it is proposed that again the election of academy representation is managed by the Schools Forum Clerking Team at the County Council. This is a common approach in most other Local Authorities.

5.3 For all election processes it is proposed the terms of reference for the Schools Forum (attached as an Appendix to this report) and an updated summary of the responsibilities of the Forum will be circulated as part of the documentation when seeking nominations. A copy of these is attached at Appendices A and B.

5.4 The first 2 items on the 24 June 2022 agenda will be the election of the chair and vice chair, and until this has taken place the meeting will be chaired by the Schools Forum Clerk or their representative.

5.5 The total membership of the Schools Forum, if all school and non-school appointments are successfully made, will be 27. To be quorate, two fifths of the voting membership, excluding any vacancies must be in attendance – which is 11 for those items where all members of the Schools Forum have a vote).

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Appendix A

Schools Forum Terms of Reference

Changes to the Terms of Reference

Please note that only minor changes have been made to the Terms of Reference:

- The date of review has been modified, as there is no longer a May meeting
- Membership reflects current membership and will be updated following the June elections
- Greater clarity of the split between headteachers and governors has been provided.
- The postholder acting as Clerk to the Forum has been updated.
- The tenure of the Chair and Vice Chair has been updated from one year to one or two years.