



Walsall Council

Schools Forum

Tuesday 26 June, 2018

Review of Schools Forum Membership

1 Purpose of Report

To ensure that Schools Forum membership complies with the *Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012*.

2 Recommendations

That Schools Forum:-

2.1 Notes:-

- The resignation of the two Primary Academy Head representatives;
- That an updated Schools Forum Constitution shall be submitted to the next meeting of Schools Forum for approval;
- That membership of the Schools Forum will next be reviewed in June, 2019.

2.2 Agrees that relevant proprietor bodies be:-

- advised of the two Primary Academy Head Teacher vacancies and asked to submit nominations; and
- informed of the date and time of the Primary, Nursery and Special Schools (PNS) meeting at which the election for the Primary Academy Head vacancies shall take place.

2.3 Increases the membership of the Schools Forum by two to accommodate:-

- One Special Academy representative; and
- One maintained secondary representative.

2.4. Requests the Clerk to contact the proprietor body of Phoenix Academy (special school) to submit its Schools Forum nominee to join Schools Forum for a four year period.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 *The Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012* state that, “An authority may determine that the number of members representing schools in a particular school category must be broadly proportionate to the total number of schools in that category when compared with the total number of schools.”
- 3.2 Walsall Schools Forum has been operating on the principle that its membership is split on the basis of pupil numbers in each group from Reception to Year 11. The split is between the defined groups of maintained secondary, maintained primary and academy as per Table 1, and is also analysed on a primary and secondary basis as per Table 3.
- 3.3 The Schools Forum Regulations provide a framework for the appointment of members, but allow a considerable degree of discretion in order to accommodate local priorities and practice. The *Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide (2017)* confirms that there is no maximum or minimum size of a schools forum.
- 3.4 At its meeting held on September, 2017 the Forum resolved to reduce the number of maintained secondary representatives by one and increase the number of Secondary Academy Representatives by one to six.
- 3.5 The *Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide (2017)* issued after this meeting by the Educations & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is clear that the membership structure of the Schools Forum should ensure that there is sufficient representation of each type of schools member in each group to ensure that debate within the schools forum is balanced and representative.
- 3.6 Accordingly, both maintained secondary school representatives continued on the Forum in line with the above guidance. This review provides the opportunity to formally restore the position.

4.0 Current Membership

- 4.1 The combined schools and academies membership must number at least two thirds of the total membership of the forum and the balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies members must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category.
- 4.2 There are currently 23 Members in total, with an additional four Observers. This includes:-

Maintained School Reps	Total
5 Primary Head Teachers 3 Primary Governors	8
1 Secondary Governor 1 Secondary Head Teacher <i>*Noting that whilst membership was reduced by 1by the Forum in September, 2017 both representatives continued to attend in line with subsequent ESFA Guidance.</i>	1

Academy Reps	
5 Secondary Academy Heads 1 Secondary Academy Governor 2 Primary Academy Heads	8
1 Special School Head 1 Special School Governor	2
1 Nursery Head Teacher	1
1 representative from PVI	1
1 representative from the Pupil Referral Unit	1
1 representative from the 14-19 School Forum	1
	23

5.0 Primary, Secondary and Academy Membership

5.1 The tables below detail the current pupil numbers and Schools Forum membership across the primary, secondary and academy sectors, as at January 2018.

- **Table 1** is in line with School Forum Regulations.
- **Table 2** breaks academies into primary and secondary phases.
- **Table 3** does not differentiate between maintained schools and academies and looks only at phase; and
- **Table 4** breaks pupil numbers into maintain schools and academies.

5.2 Members are asked to note that whilst, statistically, the number of Maintained Secondary Representatives could be reduced to one, the ESFA's *Schools Forum Operational and Good Practice Guide* recommends that there should be sufficient type of schools member in each group to ensure that debate within the Schools Forum is balanced and representative. Retaining two representatives enables the Maintained Secondary Head and Governor to remain on the forum which would be consistent with this good practice guide.

Table 1

January 2018 School Census	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Academies	Total
Pupil Numbers	20,748	3,167	20,134	44,049
% of Population	47.1%	7.2%	45.7%	100%
Current Membership	8	1	8	17
Proposed Membership	8	2	8	18

Table 2

January 2018 School Census	Maintained Primary	Maintained Secondary	Primary Academies	Secondary Academies	Total
Pupil Numbers	20,748	3,167	5,847	14,287	44,049
% of Population	47.1%	7.2%	13.27%	32.43%	100%
Current Membership	8	1	2	6	17
Proposed Membership	8	2	2	6	18

Table 3

January 2018 School Census	Primary	Secondary	Total
Pupil Numbers	26,595	17,454	44,049
% of Population	60.38%	39.62%	100%
Current Membership	10	7	17
Proposed Membership	10	8	18

Table 4

January 2018 School Census	Maintained	Academies	Total
Pupil Numbers	23,915	20,134	44,049
% of Population	54.3%	45.7%	100%
Current Membership	9	8	17
Proposed Membership	10	8	18

6.0 Primary School Vacancies

- 6.1 In March, 2018, the two Primary Academy Head Teachers resigned, resulting in the group no longer having representation on the Forum.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the Clerk write to the proprietor bodies of the Primary Academies in the Walsall Borough to request that they nominate individuals to represent Primary Academies on the Walsall Schools Forum. These nominations shall then be considered at a meeting of the Primary Nursery and Special Schools Forum as this the body that makes the appointments.
- 6.3 Members should note that Windsor Academy (sponsors of Goldsmith Academy and Rivers Academy) have previously contacted the Clerk directly to reserve the right to nominate a representative for Schools Forum when a vacancy arises. They will, of course, be notified of these vacancies.

7.0 Special Academy Member – Special School

- 7.1 On 29 September, 2017, the EFSA released an updated '*Operational and good practice guide, September 2017*', which instructed that where a local authority has a special school academy, its Schools Forum must have a representative from that sector and that their proprietor body must select the person who will represent them. Walsall has a Special Academy within its area, namely Phoenix Special Academy.
- 7.2 Subject to approval by the Schools Forum to increase the size of the Forum to accommodate a representative, the Clerk shall contact the proprietor body to notify them of the opportunity to nominate a person to join Schools Forum and seek a nomination.

8.0 Election Process

- 8.1 The PNS elects Primary Academy Heads. The Clerk will advise proprietor bodies of the vacancy and confirm that the election shall take place at PNS. The Clerk will then ask for nominations and forward them to the Chair of the PNS.
- 8.2 Primary Academy Governor vacancies are appointed by election from amongst primary governors. The clerk shall arrange for an election to be undertaken in accordance with relevant processes.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 None.

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 Based on the recommended membership, the numbers of members representing schools in a particular school category will be broadly proportionate to the total number of schools in that category when compared with the total number of schools.

11.0 School Improvement

11.1 There are no issues directly arising from this report.

Authors

Neil Picken

Senior Democratic Services Officer

Bev Mycock

Democratic Services Officer – Clerk to Schools Forum