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|  | | Coventry Schools Forum 3rd October 2024  Agenda Item 5 |
|  |  |
| Education & Skills | |

**Title:** Schools Forum Membership Review

**Recommendation**

This item is for the Schools Forum to approve

* **The Schools Forum should approve the updated membership split, and review again in 6 months’ time**
* **Review and ratify changes to the constitution**

**Voting:** All Members

# Executive Summary

## Primary, Secondary and Academy school membership on the Schools Forum must be broadly proportionate to the total number of pupils registered at them; however each type of school within the LA area must have representation on the Forum (e.g. maintained special, maintained nursery, pupil referral unit).

## Mainstream academy representatives are not phase specific. However, we continue to recommend that the academy group considers a representation broadly proportionate to the phase split of academies.

## The current membership position is attached at appendix A. Based on a review of pupil numbers[[1]](#footnote-1) and phase of school there are two changes required to the membership structure so the spilt of Schools Forum representatives remains proportional to the school population.

* + Reduction of 1 Maintained Primary representative
  + Increase of 1 Mainstream Academy representative

## This proposed membership position is attached at appendix B. A further change to the membership could be required with further academy conversions during the year so it is recommended that the representation is reviewed again in 6 months’ time. If subsequent changes are needed a new report will be brought to the Schools Forum.

## There are currently three vacancies on the Schools Forum which are one vacancies in Mainstream Academies one vacancy in Special Headteachers and one in PRU’s. It is recommended that the Schools Forum actively pursue membership to these positions in line with the constitution (appendix C).

# Further Information

## The current Schools Forum constitution is attached at Appendix C.

## It sets out: Purpose of the Schools Forum, Membership, Term of Office, Disqualification, Substitute Members, Chair and Vice Chair, Quorum, Proceedings, Voting, Interests, Financial Expenses, Clerking, Meetings, Record of Proceedings, Sub Committees and Working Groups, Advice to the Schools Forum, Review of Constitution. It also includes an appendix on election responsibilities and procedures. A few minor changes are highlighted in yellow.

# Who does the report affect?

## All Schools and other Stakeholders

**Report author(s):**

**Name and job title: Janice Chan, Accountant (Business Partner)**

**Service: Financial Management**

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

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| **Contributor/approver name** | **Title** | **Division or organisation** | **Date doc sent out** | **Date response received or approved** |
| Rachael Sugars | Strategic Lead - Education | Coventry City Council | 25/09/2024 | 26/09/2024 |
| Sybil Hanson | Chair of Schools Forum | Schools Forum | 25/09/2024 | 25/09/2024 |
| Lucy Lambert | Clerk to the Schools Forum | Schools Forum | 25/09/2024 | 25/09/2024 |

This report is published on the Schools Forum Section of the council's website: <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/schoolsforum>

**Appendix A**

**Coventry Schools Forum Membership – 2023/24 academic year**

**Schools Group**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **No** | **Name** | **School** | **Term** |
| Primary Headteachers | 4 | Isobel Rose | Mount Nod | Sept 26 |
| Gary Watson | Hollyfast | Feb 27 |
| Louise Kelman | Stoke Heath | Oct 25 |
| Joss Andrews | Broad Heath | Sept 26 |
| Primary Governors | 3 | Ruth Williamson | Grangehurst | Feb 25 |
| John Teago | Cannon Park | Oct 25 |
| Vacancy |  |  |
| Academies | 11 | Sarah Malam | Courthouse Green | Sept 24 |
| Chris Bishop | Finham Park | Sept 24 |
| Helen Quinn | Romero MAC | Apr 25 |
| Michelle Nisbet | Inspire Education Trust | May 25 |
| Marina Kelly | Holy Cross MAC | Jan 26 |
| Claire Turpin | Sidney Stringer MAT | Mar 26 |
| Leah Baddeley | Diocese of Coventry MAT | Mar 26 |
| Sarah Kenrick | Caludon Castle | Mar 26 |
| Louise Stewart | Charter | Jul 26 |
| Jack Lockhart | Frederick Bird | Feb 27 |
| Vacancy |  |  |
| Special Academy | 1 | Alison Francis | Baginton Fields | Mar 27 |
| Special Headteachers | 1 | Vacancy |  |  |
| Special School Governors | 1 | Julie McBride | Castle Wood | Apr 26 |
| Nursery School | 1 | Fiona Brinson | Hillfields Children’s Centre and Nursery School | Sept 25 |
| PRU | 1 | Glenn Mellor | Coventry Extended Learning Centre (CELC) | Jun 25 |

**Non-Schools Group**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Group Represented** |
| Justine Lomas | Diocesan Education Service |
| Sybil Hanson | Diocesan Board of Education |
| Nicky Downes | CLYP Trade Union Strategic Group |
| Rosemary Malcolm | Early Years/Nursery PVI Providers |
| Sophie Dent | Institution (other than a school or academy) providing 16-19 education |

**Observers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Title** |
| Councillor Kindy Sandhu | Cabinet Member Education and Skills |

**Supporting Officers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Title** |
| Rachael Sugars | Head of Education Improvement and Standards |
| Sarah Kinsell | Finance Manager, Resources |
| Paul Hammond | Lead Accountant, Business Partner, Schools Finance |
| Lucy Lambert | Clerk |

**Appendix B**

**PROPOSED Coventry Schools Forum Membership - September 2024**

**Schools Group**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **No** | **Name** | **School** | **Term** |
| Primary Headteachers | 4 | Isobel Rose | Mount Nod | Sept 26 |
| Gary Watson | Hollyfast | Feb 27 |
| Louise Kelman | Stoke Heath | Oct 25 |
| Joss Andrews | Broad Heath | Sept 26 |
| Primary Governors | 2 | Ruth Williamson | Grangehurst | Feb 25 |
| John Teago | Cannon Park | Oct 25 |
| Academies | 12 | Sarah Malam | Courthouse Green | Sept 27 |
| Chris Bishop | Finham Park | Sept 27 |
| Helen Quinn | Romero MAC | Apr 25 |
| Michelle Nisbet | Inspire Education Trust | May 25 |
| Marina Kelly | Holy Cross MAC | Jan 26 |
| Claire Turpin | Sidney Stringer MAT | Mar 26 |
| Leah Baddeley | Diocese of Coventry MAT | Mar 26 |
| Sarah Kenrick | Caludon Castle | Mar 26 |
| Louise Stewart | Charter | Jul 26 |
| Jack Lockhart | Frederick Bird | Feb 27 |
| Glenn Mellor | Coventry AP Academy | Jun 25 |
| Vacancy |  |  |
| Special Academy | 1 | Alison Francis | Baginton Fields | Mar 27 |
| Special Headteachers | 1 | Vacancy |  |  |
| Special School Governors | 1 | Julie McBride | Castle Wood | Apr 26 |
| Nursery School | 1 | Fiona Brinson | Hillfields Children’s Centre and Nursery School | Sept 25 |
| PRU | 1 | Vacancy |  |  |

**Non-Schools Group**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Group Represented** |
| Justine Lomas | Diocesan Education Service |
| Sybil Hanson | Diocesan Board of Education |
| Nicky Downes | CLYP Trade Union Strategic Group |
| Rosemary Malcolm | Early Years/Nursery PVI Providers |
| Rachael Barnes | Institution (other than a school or academy) providing 16-19 education |

**Observers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Title** |
| Councillor Kindy Sandhu | Cabinet Member Education and Skills |

**Supporting Officers**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Title** |
| Rachael Sugars | Head of Education Improvement and Standards |
| Sarah Kinsell | Finance Manager, Resources |
| Paul Hammond | Lead Accountant, Business Partner, Schools Finance |
| Lucy Lambert | Clerk |

**APPENDIX C**

**Coventry Schools Forum**

**Constitution**

**1. Purpose of the Schools Forum**

1.1The Coventry Schools Forum is established under Section 47A Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and is constituted in accordance with 'The Schools Forum (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012'.

1.2 The purpose of the Coventry Schools Forum is to –

Be consulted on:

* Amendments to the school funding formula, for which the voting is restricted by the exclusion of non-schools members except for Private Voluntary & Independent nursery representatives
* Arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding
* Arrangements for the use of pupil referral units and the education of children otherwise than at school, in particular the places to be commissioned by the LA and schools and the arrangements for paying top-up funding
* Arrangements for early years provision
* Administrative arrangements for the allocation of central government grants paid to schools via the Local Authority
* When a contract is being proposed for supplies and services which is funded from the Schools Budget and in excess of the EU Procurement thresholds
* Proposals to vary the Minimum Funding Guarantee; use exceptional factors; vary pupil numbers; allow additional categories of, or spending on, central budgets; vary the lump sum for amalgamating schools; or vary the protection for special schools and special academies prior to submission to secretary of state for approval
* Any other matters as the local authority sees fit.

Make decisions on:

* De-delegation from mainstream school budgets for prescribed budgets to be provided centrally
* Creating a fund for significant pupil growth in order to support the Local Authority's duty for place planning and agree the criteria for maintained schools and academies to access this 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 maintained schools and academies to access this fund.
* Funding for prescribed historic commitments where the effect of delegating this funding would be destabilising
* Funding for LA in order to meet prescribed statutory duties placed upon it.
* Funding for central early years expenditure
* Carrying forward a deficit arising in central expenditure to be funded from the schools budget

**2. Membership**

* 1. **Schools Members (23)**
* 6 primary school representatives (4 headteachers or 'senior members of staff' elected by the primary headteachers group and 2 governors elected by primary school governors).
* 12 mainstream academy representatives (elected by the governing bodies of mainstream academies in the local authority area).
* 2 special school representatives (1 headteacher or 'senior members of staff' elected by the special school headteachers group and 1 governor elected by special school governors).
* 1 special academy representative (elected by the governing bodies of special academies in the local authority area).
* 1 representative of nursery schools (the headteacher or ‘senior member of staff' or a governor nominated by the governing body of Hillfields Early Years Centre).
* 1 representative of a Pupil Referral Unit

**2.2 Non- Schools Members (5)**

One person to be nominated by each of the following:

* The Diocesan Education Service of the Archdiocese of Birmingham
* The Coventry Diocesan Board of Education
* The Children, Learning and Young Peoples Directorate Trades Union Strategic Group (representing trades unions)
* Institution (other than a school or academy) providing education to 16-19 year olds
* The Early Years Nursery Private Voluntary & Independent nursery Provider Sector

2.3 Schools forum members will need the skills and competencies to manage Forum business and to take a strategic view across the whole education estate whilst acting as a representative of the group that has elected them. Furthermore, they should be easily contactable and pro-active in raising the profile of issues and communicate decisions, and the reasons behind them, effectively

2.4 Headteachers can be represented by other senior members of staff within their school. Governors can include interim executive members of an interim executive board.

2.5 Appendix A sets out the procedures for electing/nominating Schools Forum members.

2.6 The Cabinet Member (Education) shall be invited to attend meetings of the Schools Forum as an observer.

2.7 Members of the Executive (Cabinet) of Coventry City Council and 'Relevant Officers' of Coventry City Council, as defined by the Regulations may not be members of the Schools Forum.

2.8 Elected Members of the City Council, who are not otherwise members of the Forum by virtue of being elected as governor representatives, shall be entitled to attend and speak (but not vote) at meetings of the Coventry Schools Forum.

**3. Term of Office**

* 1. School members shall be appointed for a period of three years. They may be re-elected at the end of their term of office provided they continue to meet the criteria for election.
  2. The City Council will normally ask the groups or organisations designated to nominate non-school members for a nomination every three years. Existing non-school members shall continue until a replacement is appointed. The nominating group or organisation may ask to change their nominee at any time.
  3. Any member may resign from the Coventry Schools Forum at any time by giving notice in writing to the Clerk.

**4. Disqualification**

4.1 The City Council may end the appointment of any member of the Coventry Schools Forum before the end of their term of office if the member concerned ceases to be eligible for appointment to the Schools Forum.

4.2 Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Schools Forum (even if they have nominated a substitute member to attend) may be asked to resign unless the Schools Forum considers that there are particular or exceptional circumstances that have prevented their attendance.

**5. Substitute Members**

* 1. Any member may nominate a substitute to attend a meeting and vote if he or she is unable to do so, subject to paragraphs 5.2 to 5.6 below.
  2. A substitute nominated by a member who is a headteacher or 'senior member of staff' must be a headteacher or 'senior member of staff' of a school of the same phase.
  3. A substitute nominated by a member who is a governor must be a governor of a school of the same phase.
  4. A substitute member nominated by a member who is a representative of an academy must be a headteacher, senior member of staff, or governor of an academy situated in the local authority area.
  5. A substitute nominated by a member who is a 'non-schools' member must be a member of the 'relevant body' by which that member was nominated.
  6. Notice of a substitute member must be given in writing to the Clerk at least 24 hours in advance of the relevant.
  7. A substitute member may only attend the relevant meeting for which he/she has been nominated.

**6. Chair and Vice-Chair**

6.1The Coventry Schools Forum shall, at the first meeting which falls on or after the first day of September in each year, elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.

6.2In the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the Schools Forum shall elect one of their numbers to fill that vacancy for the remainder of the current term of office.

6.3A Chair or Vice-Chair shall cease to hold office if they resign by giving written notice to the Clerk, or if they cease to be eligible to be a member of the Schools Forum.

6.4 An Elected Member of Coventry City Council or an 'excepted relevant officer' of the City Council, as defined by the Regulations cannot be elected as chair or vice chair of the Forum.

**7. Quorum**

* 1. Meetings of the Coventry Schools Forum will be quorate if at least forty per cent of the membership of the Forum, excluding any vacancies, is present at a meeting.

7.2 The Schools Forum may continue to meet if it is inquorate **but** cannot make a formal decision on any matter set out in sections 1.2 above. If it continues to meet whilst inquorate it may respond to consultations. Any outcomes from an inquorate meeting will take the form of advice to the local authority.

**8. Proceedings**

The validity of any proceedings of the Schools Forum shall not be affected by any vacancy among the membership or by any deficit in the appointment of a member.

**9. Voting**

Voting will be done in accordance with the relevant legislation,and recognising items that can only be voted on by schools members. The chair is not able to take a decision on behalf of the Forum.

**10. Interests**

10.1 Members of the Schools Forum should declare an interest in any individual matter which directly affects a school of which they are a governor, headteacher or other employee **except** where that interest is no greater than the interest of the generality of schools maintained by the City Council or academies in the local authority area.

10.2 Consistent with the principles set out above, any member with such an interest should take no part in the decision on the matter and the Forum will consider whether the member should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is being discussed.

* 1. Where it is clear that a decision in which a member has such an interest is likely to arise at a meeting, the member concerned may wish to nominate an appropriate substitute to attend the relevant meeting in accordance with section 5 above

**11. Financial Expenses**

11.1 All expenses of the Coventry Schools Forum shall be met from a budget agreed annually by the Schools Forum.

11.2 The Schools Forum shall reimburse its members for reasonable expenses in connection with their attendance at its meetings.

**12. Clerking**

The Director Education, Libraries & Adult Learning (or his/her nominee) will act as Clerk to the Coventry Schools Forum.

**13. Meetings**

13.1 The Clerk shall convene all meetings of the Forum but shall comply with any direction in the matter given by:

(i) The Schools Forum at a previous meeting; or

1. The Chair or, in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair as long as this is not inconsistent with any previous direction given under (i) above.

13.2 The Clerk shall issue a notice and agenda for each meeting to every member of the Forum. Agenda’s will be published 5 working days prior to the meeting.

* 1. The Schools Forum shall meet at least four times a year.

13.4 The Clerk will produce a schedule of meetings taking into account any views expressed by the Schools Forum and/or the chair and enabling the Schools Forum to make timely decisions or be consulted on any relevant matter.

13.5 Where there is a need for an urgent decision on any matter which falls within the remit of the Forum, the Clerk will convene a special meeting of the Forum. Where, in exceptional circumstances, this is not possible, the Clerk will send relevant information by email to all members of the Forum, with a response date, and the chair and vice chair jointly will advise the local authority based on the responses received. Their advice must be reported to the next meeting of the Forum.

13.6 Meetings of the Coventry Schools Forum shall be held in public, and the papers, agendas and minutes will be publicly available on the City Council website. <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/schoolsforum>

**14. Record of Proceedings**

14.1 The Clerk shall keep a record of the proceedings of each meeting in the form of minutes.

* 1. The minutes will be open to inspection.

1. **Sub Committees and Working Groups**

15.1 The Schools Forum may establish such sub-committees or working groups as it sees fit.

15.2 Any recommendation or decision of a sub committee or working group must be approved by the Schools Forum before it becomes effective unless otherwise previously agreed.

1. **Advice to the Schools Forum**

The Coventry Schools Forum shall be supported by:

* The Director of Education, Libraries and Adult Learning or Officers nominated by him/her.
* The Director of Finance & Corporate Services or Officers nominated by him/her.
* Other appropriate Officers of Coventry City Council at the invitation of the Schools Forum or the Director of Education, Libraries & Adult Learning.

**17. Review of Constitution**

The constitution shall normally be reviewed at least every four years, except that representation on the schools group shall be reviewed every 6 months until further notice.

**Appendix D**

**PROCEDURES FOR ELECTING/NOMINATING SCHOOL FORUM MEMBERS**

Pupil numbers within each sector will be checked in September and February each year to determine if the maintained/academy ratio of members is still valid.

Appropriate support to each group or sub-group to manage their election should be offered by the clerk of the Schools Forum.

Care should be taken to ensure that EVERY eligible member of a group or sub-group has the opportunity to stand for election if they chose to do so and be involved in any election process.

The Local Authority will set a date by which the election should take place and will appoint the schools member if there is no election.

Refer to the constitution for a definition of a senior member of staff.

The appointment of any member will be terminated if the member ceases to be eligible for that particular category.

**SCHOOL MEMBERS**

All terms of appointment are for THREE YEARS.

* MAINTAINED PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS

The maintained members of the primary headteacher group are responsible for the election of their representatives.

* MAINTAINED PRIMARY GOVERNORS

The clerk should inform all relevant governing bodies of any vacancies and invite nominations and conduct an election if necessary.

* MAINTAINED SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS

The maintained members of the secondary headteacher group are responsible for the election of their representatives.

* MAINTAINED SECONDARY GOVERNORS

The clerk should inform all relevant governing bodies of any vacancies and invite nominations and conduct an election if necessary.

* ACADEMIES

Free Schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools are classed as academies for School Forum purposes.

There are three sub-groups for academy members: mainstream, special and alternative provision and it is for the proprietors within each sub-group to elect their representatives.

There is no requirement to further split into primary and secondary sub-groups. Although it is recommended that there is an appropriate split to represent schools of each phase.

* SPECIAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS

The maintained members of the special schools headteacher group are responsible for the election of their representatives. They can be headteachers or senior members of staff.

* MAINTAINED SPECIAL SCHOOL GOVERNORS

The clerk should inform all relevant governing bodies of any vacancies and invite nominations and conduct an election if necessary.

* MAINTAINED NURSERY SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

As there is currently only one school in this category, the governing body of Hillfields Early Years Centre will nominate either the headteacher or a senior member of staff or a governor to be their representative.

* PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT

The members of the Pupil Referral Unit management group are responsible for the election of their representatives.

**NON SCHOOL MEMBERS**

* DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE OF THE BIRMINGHAM ARCHDIOCESE
* DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION OF COVENTRY DIOCESE
* LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDRENS SERVICES TRADE UNION STRATEGIC GROUP
* EARLY YEARS NURSERY PRIVATE/VOLUNTARY/INDEPENDENT PROVIDERS

The Local Authority, through the Schools Forum clerk, will ask each of the above groups or organisations to nominate a representative.

* INSTITUTIONS OTHER THAN A SCHOOL OR ACADEMY PROVIDING EDUCATION FOR 16-19 YEAR OLDS

The 16-19 providers are responsible for electing their representative assisted by the Schools Forum clerk.

1. Please note pupil numbers used for membership analysis are taken from the May-24 census. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)