



Title of meeting: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 26 May 2021

Subject: Schools Forum Constitution 2021-22

Report by: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

Wards affected: All

Key decision: Yes/No

Full Council decision: Yes/No

1 Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

1.1.1 update the Schools Forum on the composition of membership which has been updated to provide for appropriate representation between maintained schools and academies within the city,

1.1.2 seek Schools Forum approval to revise the constitution attached at Appendix A.

2 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Schools Forum:

2.1.1 approves the revised constitution attached at Appendix A, to take effect from 26 May 2021

3 Background

3.1 The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), together with the 'Schools Forum: operational and good practice guide' published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency¹, set out how the membership of Schools Forums should be constituted, the requirements relating to the meetings of the Schools Forum and their proceedings, as well as the financial issues on which forums must be consulted.

¹[Schools forum operational and good practice guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)



Schools Forum approved the current constitution in May 2018, May 2019 and again in July 2020. Following a review of the current make up, as set out in section 4 of this report, it is proposed to revise the constitution to reflect the change to the proportion of pupils in academy primary schools following recent academy conversions.

4 Membership

- 4.1 The membership structure is required to be reviewed regularly to ensure appropriate representation is maintained, particularly where there is a change in the number of academies in the city.
- 4.2 Whilst there is no specified maximum or minimum size required for a Schools Forum, it is recommended that the membership should be kept to a reasonable size. The proposals below seek to retain the overall membership at 22.

School & Academy Members

- 4.3 The School and Academy members together must number at least two-thirds of the total membership of the Schools Forum and the balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category.
- 4.4 Since the last constitution was approved by Schools Forum, there have been further Academy conversions within the city so that currently there are 20 maintained schools and 39 academies.
- 4.5 The table below summarises the pupil numbers across the categories, (based on the October 2020 census) and shows that Academies account for 68% of the pupil population in the city.

Percentage of pupil numbers in each school category as at October 2020						
Category	NOR maintained schools	%	NOR academies	%	NOR Total	%
Primary	6,417.00	76%	9,694.00	54%	16,111.00	61%
Secondary	1,978.00	24%	7,569.00	42%	9,547.00	36%
Special / AP	0.00	0%	691.00	4%	691.00	3%
TOTAL	8,395.00	100%	17,954.00	100%	26,349.00	100%
%	32%		68%		100%	

- 4.6 Whilst Academies account for 68% of the total pupil population in the city, this differs by phase as shown below.



Percentage of pupil population by Phase as at October 2020			
Category	% pupils in maintained schools	% pupils in academies	Total
Primary	40%	60%	100%
Secondary	21%	79%	100%
Special / AP	0%	100%	100%

4.7 Following the conversion of four primary schools over the last two years and the recent conversion of the last maintained special school to academy status, the proportion of pupils in academy schools has increased significantly. It is therefore proposed to update the structure of the Schools Forum membership in respect of the 'School Members' and 'Academy Members', as shown below.

School Members:	Current Structure	Proposed Structure
Head teacher representative - primary phase	2	2
Head teacher representative - secondary phase	1	1
Head teacher representative - special phase	1	0
Governor representative - primary phase	1	1
Governor representative - secondary phase	1	1
Total School Members	6	5
Academy Members:		
Primary Academy Proprietor	4	5
Secondary Academy Proprietor	5	5
Special Academy Proprietor	1	1
Total Academy Members	10	11
Total School & Academy Members	16	16

4.8 The summary below shows how the schools will be represented in total by phase (both maintained and Academy).

Primary Members	8
Secondary Members	7
Special Members	1
Total School Members	16

4.9 A maintained school member must stand down from membership of Schools Forum if their school converts to Academy status, as the member will no longer occupy the office by which he or she became eligible for election.



4.10 There are no proposed amendments to the remaining membership which is as follows:

Councillors	4
Post-16 representative	1
Early Years representative	1
Total Other Members	6

5 Meetings

5.1 Due to the Coronavirus pandemic the Government updated the Schools Forum regulations. The Schools Forum (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which came into effect on 18 June 2020 to provide Schools Forum with the powers to meet remotely while they are unable to meet physically due to the Coronavirus. These powers were in place to the 31 March 2021.

5.2 On 26 March 2021 the Education and Skills Funding Agency wrote to all local authorities confirming that the School and Early Years Finance (England) regulations 2021 amended The Schools Forums (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 to make permanent the provision to enable Schools Forums meetings to be held remotely. The regulations set out that Schools Forum must be public meetings, which includes meetings that the public can access remotely. This includes but is not limited to telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast and live interactive streaming.

5.3 Consideration has been given regarding the impact on the current constitution of the permanent revision to the legislation and it is proposed to update Section 4 to include this revision.

6 Reasons for recommendations

6.1 The proposals within this paper are required to ensure that operation of the Schools Forum in Portsmouth is compliant with the relevant regulations and good practice guidance issued by the Department for Education.

6.2 In particular it is necessary to regularly review the Schools Forum membership to ensure that appropriate representation is made, particularly where there is a change in the number of Academies in the city.

7 Integrated impact assessment

7.1 An integrated impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not have a positive or negative impact on communities and safety,



regeneration and culture, environment and public space or equality and diversity.

8 Legal implications

- 8.1 Regulation 35 of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021 has effect to permit, on a permanent basis, public meetings of the Schools Forum to be held by remote means.
- 8.2 The form of constitution attached at Appendix A continues to reflect the requirements of the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

9 Director of Finance's comments

- 9.1 There are no financial implications contained within this report.

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Signed by: Alison Jeffery, Director Children Families and Education

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Schools Forum Constitution (including the powers and responsibilities)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)	The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (legislation.gov.uk)
Schools Forums: operational and good practice guide	Schools forum operational and good practice guide amended March 2021.pdf
School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021	The School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2021 (legislation.gov.uk)

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: