

# Membership and Powers and Responsibilities of the Schools' Forum 2014-15

## Schools Forum

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> January 2014

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Author:	Head of Commissioning, Education and Attainment
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

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### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To advise Schools Forum members of operational and good practice guidance for 2014-15 and onwards issued by the Education Funding Agency in October 2013.
- 1.2 Schools Forum received a report at its meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2012, which defined the current membership arrangements.
- 1.3 Schools' Forum members have asked for a review of membership to ensure it is compliant with regulations.

### 2. Recommendations

The Schools' Forum is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the content of the operational and good practice guidance for 2014-15 issued by the Education Funding Agency.
- 2.2 Comment on the current membership of Schools' Forum and give a view about the profile of future membership.
- 2.3 Establish a working group of School Forum members and Local Authority officers to review the good practice guidance and report back by July 2014 with any recommendations to change current practice.

### 3. Detail

- 3.1 "Schools' Forums: operational and good practice guide", attached at appendix 1, is the document issued by the Education Funding Agency in October 2013. The target audience includes local authorities and members of schools' forums. Within the document, pages 3 to 8 include a helpful summary of schools' forum structure and powers and responsibilities for 2014-15.
- 3.2 Schools and academies members must comprise at least two thirds of Forum membership. Primary and secondary schools and academies must be broadly proportionately represented on Schools' Forum, based on the total number of pupils registered at them.

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- 3.3 The guidance identifies groups which should form the membership of the School's Forum. These are:
- 3.3.1 Schools – secondary, special, PRUs, no specific requirement for a primary representative, but this is captured by requiring membership to be based on proportion of overall numbers in each phase, members can be a mix of headteachers, senior staff and governors
  - 3.3.2 Academies – will represent academies, free schools, UTCs and Studio Schools
  - 3.3.3 Non-schools- 16-19 providers, Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent providers, other groups, including diocesan representation to be determined locally.
- 3.4 The current membership of the Schools' Forum is included in appendix 2. The existing arrangements will need to change to reflect the changes in status of some schools members. The numbers from representative groups meet the requirement for schools and academies members to form two thirds of the membership of the forum, but the members representing schools and academies need to be realigned. The Local Authority will manage these changes for the first meeting of the Schools' Forum in the financial year 2014-15.
- 3.5 With regard to the further requirement that primary, secondary and academies are broadly proportionately represented in the membership, the school population data from the October 2013 census is included in the table below. Since the October census, some schools have converted to academy status which shifts the balance more noticeably towards more pupils in academies than maintained schools. The October census data indicates that 14,871 pupils attend academies and 14,489 are on the roll of maintained schools. These figures, even with post October changes would indicate a broad balance in numbers between schools and academies members.

<b>Pupil numbers at Swindon schools</b>	<b>Academy</b>	<b>Maintained</b>
Primary	6281	11988
Secondary	8554	2104
Special	36	397

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The primary/secondary split is 32,758 pupils compared with 10,658.

- 3.6 In order to be compliant with requirements, the current membership of 18 needs to have 12 schools and academies members in total. We are compliant in this regard. Secondly, the 12 members should split as 6 schools and 6 academies members. Thirdly, there should be one maintained special school representative and one member from the PRU. Finally, of the remaining 10 schools and academies members, at least 6 should represent the primary sector and 4 the secondary sector.
- 3.7 Schools' Forum members are asked to comment on a proposed membership which retains the current representation of organisations in the Non-Schools membership group. In the schools and academies groups, the proposal is as follows:
- 3.7.1 Schools
- 1 PRU headteacher or senior member of staff
  - 1 special school headteacher or senior member of staff or governor
  - 1 secondary headteacher or senior member of staff or governor
  - 3 primary headteachers or senior members of staff or governor
- 3.7.2 Academies
- 2 secondary headteachers or senior members of staff (could include the UTC or a Free School)
  - 2 governors (1 primary and 1 secondary)
  - 2 primary headteachers or senior members of staff
- 3.8 During the course of a year, it is quite likely that a current Schools Member of the forum may need to resign from that representative group as s/he has become employed by an academy trust or is involved in the governance of an academy. Similarly, the opposite change may occur. The Education Funding Agency is concerned about maintaining broad levels of representation. It is suggested that the Local Authority and the Schools' Forum reviews membership annually in preparation for a new financial year, as long as membership remains broadly representative. If it does not, the Local Authority will bring forward changes to membership to restore compliance with requirements.

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## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Schools' Forum could decide not to review its practice in light of the guidance from the Education Funding Agency as the guidance on good practice is not statutory.

## 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial or procurement implications arising from this report.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no legal or human rights implications arising from this report.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 This report does not make any recommendations that affect these areas.

### Links to One Swindon, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 Utilisation of the DSG has a direct link to two of the Council's five priorities – "Right skills, right jobs in the right place" and "Make the best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council".

### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 As there are no proposals in this report, a DIA has not been completed.

### Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no specific risk management implications not highlighted in the body of the report.

## 6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## 7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

## 8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Schools' Forums: operational and good practice guide, Education Funding Agency

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8.2 Appendix 2 – Schools Forum Membership as of 2013-14