

SLOUGH SCHOOLS FORUM CONSTITUTION 2017

1.	Introduction
	<p>The Government requires that each Local Authority (LA) maintains a Schools Forum.</p> <p>Slough Borough Council established a Schools Forum in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 2002 and subsequent regulations and in line with the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2261) (as amended): http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2261/contents/made</p> <p>It complies with the Department for Education (DfE) Schools Forum Structure March 2015: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417331/Schools_forums_structure.pdf</p> <p>It also complies with the Schools Forum Operational and good practice guide as updated September 2017: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2015</p> <p>The Constitution will be reviewed every three years, or sooner should there be changes to the relevant regulations or DfE guidance which warrant this.</p> <p>The Forum shall be called the 'Slough Schools Forum' referred to in this Constitution as 'the Forum'.</p> <p>A brief guide to the operation of Schools Forums can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-forum-a-guide-for-schools-and-academies</p> <p>Appendix A is a local framework for decision making and Schools Forum process.</p>
2.	Membership
2.1	<p>A written record of the membership of the Forum is maintained and is available on request from the Clerk to the Forum.</p> <p>A Forum must comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ schools members ➤ academies members ➤ non-schools members <p>Maintained schools members and academies members must together make up at least two thirds of the membership of the Forum.</p>

APPENDIX B

	<p>Academies and maintained primary and secondary schools must be broadly proportionately represented on the Forum, having regard to the total numbers of pupils registered at them.</p> <p>Vacancies will not be filled until it has been confirmed that the correct proportionality will be maintained by such a replacement.</p>
2.1.1	<p>Schools Members (maintained schools)</p> <p>Schools members have voting rights.</p> <p>At least one member must be a representative of the governing bodies of maintained schools and at least one member must be a representative of the Headteachers of such schools. Governors can include interim executive members of an Interim Executive Board (IEB).</p> <p>Where the LA maintains one or more primary school at least one schools member must be a representative of a primary school. If the LA maintains one or more secondary schools, at least one schools member must be a representative of a secondary school.</p> <p>This also applies to where the LA maintains one or more special schools, nursery schools or Pupil Referral Units.</p> <p>When elections take place, these are in line with maintaining broadly proportionate phase balance in the membership of the Forum (having regard to the total numbers of pupils in each phase). In addition, electing groups should be mindful of the types of school i.e. Community, Foundation and Voluntary Aided and to seek to maintain representation across these groups.</p> <p>The aim will also be to achieve a balance in the numbers of Headteacher members* and Governor members wherever possible.</p> <p>* Headteachers can be represented by other senior members of staff within their school.</p> <p>Schools members are elected by the relevant Headteacher groups or relevant Governing Bodies as appropriate.</p>
2.1.2	<p>Academies Members</p> <p>Academies members have voting rights.</p> <p>Academies members must be elected to the Forum by the proprietors of the academies in the LA's area.</p> <p>There are three sub-groups for academy members: mainstream academies, special academies and alternative provision academies and it is for the proprietors of academies within each of these sub-groups to elect their representatives.</p> <p>In the interest of proportionality, the Forum would wish to seek to maintain a balance in numbers between phases and when a vacancy arises, academy proprietors will be encouraged to take account of phase balance (primary and secondary) in electing members.</p> <p>Academies representation is not necessarily restricted to Principals, senior staff or Governors.</p>

2.1.3	<p>Non Schools – Members</p> <p>Non Schools Members have voting rights with some restrictions in place.</p> <p>Non-schools members must not number more than a third of the Forum’s total membership.</p> <p>The purpose of non-schools members is to bring greater breadth of discussion to Forum meetings and ensure that stakeholders and partners other than schools are represented.</p> <p>There must be representatives for 16-19 providers and the early years’ Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector.</p>
2.1.4	<p>Observers</p> <p>Observers do not have voting rights</p> <p>The Secretary of State can appoint an observer to attend and speak at Forum meetings, for example a representative from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.</p> <p>Other Attendees</p> <p>Attendees have no voting rights.</p> <p>The Lead Commissioner for Education and Children’s Services will be invited to attend all meetings.</p> <p>LA Officers will attend to present to the Forum and to provide advice and information. Regulations restrict attendance to the Director of Children’s Services (or their representative), Chief Finance Officer (or their representative) or other officers providing specific financial or technical advice (including presenting a paper to the Forum).</p>
2.2	<p>Substitutes</p> <p>Each member of the Forum may have one substitute from the same group. Substitutes will only be permitted where they have been nominated formally and approved by the Forum prior to attendance.</p>
2.3	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Where a member has not been in attendance for four consecutive meetings, the Clerk to the Forum shall write to the member seeking an explanation.</p> <p>The Forum reserves the right, with the LA, to recommend replacing that member where it is felt that it is not possible for the member to provide consistent attendance.</p>
2.4	<p>Period of Membership</p> <p>Each term of office for each member shall be a maximum of three years and shall be agreed with each new member, seeking to ensure that terms of office end at staggered intervals to maintain continuity of experience.</p> <p>Membership may be terminated by the LA in advance of the full term if the member ceases to act in the capacity for which s/he was appointed (e.g. ceases to be a Governor or Headteacher) or,</p>

	<p>if the member communicates in writing to the Clerk a wish to resign.</p> <p>For non- schools members the member may be replaced by the LA, at the request of the body the member represents, by another person nominated by that body.</p> <p>Vacancies will be filled as soon as practicable through the appropriate group.</p>
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Proportionality and elections</p> <p>There will be an annual review of proportionality of pupil numbers in maintained schools and academies and within each phase, based on verified census pupil data (usually the October census), to take account of schools converting to academy status. Where this review shows an imbalance this will be addressed through the appropriate election procedures.</p> <p>In addition, where practicable, where a vacancy arises, the Chair will confirm the proportionality of pupil numbers in maintained schools and academies and within each phase and recommend filling the vacancy/ies.</p> <p>Representatives will be elected by their constituent groups.</p> <p>Maintained schools: For the election of Headteachers or their representatives this will be the maintained school Headteachers in the appropriate Headteachers’ phase group</p> <p>For Governors, the Clerk will write to all Chairs of Governors of the relevant phase/s seeking nominations. Once nominations are received the Clerk will write again with nominations and the Clerk will manage the election process on behalf of the schools.</p> <p>For Academies: The Clerk will write to academy proprietors seeking nominations. Once nominations are received the Clerk will write again with nominations and the Clerk will manage the election process on behalf of the academies.</p>
<p>2.6</p>	<p>Election by the Local Authority</p> <p>If, for any reason, an election for a schools member or an academies member representative does not take place by any date set by the LA or any such election results in a tie, the LA must appoint the schools member or academies member to the Forum instead.</p>
<p>2.7</p>	<p>The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Forum</p> <p>The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected from among the voting members of the Forum.</p> <p>Elections will take place as required at the first meeting of the academic year and the Chair and Vice-Chair will serve for a two-year term.</p> <p>The Chair may not make decisions on behalf of the Forum though s/he can give a view to the LA on an urgent issue.</p>
<p>2.8</p>	<p>Number required for Quorum</p> <p>The Forum shall be quorate if at least forty percent (40%) of the current membership (excluding vacancies) is present at a meeting. A meeting may proceed if inquorate but cannot take decisions legally.</p>

2.9	<p>Voting Procedures</p> <p>Maintained Schools: Only primary representatives can vote on primary school de-delegation. Only secondary representatives can vote on secondary school de-delegation. Voting on retaining funding for statutory duties relating to maintained schools only is limited to maintained primary, secondary, special and PRU members. All schools members can vote on the Scheme for Financing Schools. All schools members can vote on any other Schools Forum business, including the consultation on the funding formula.</p> <p>Academies: Academy members may not vote on de-delegation, the Scheme for Financing Schools or retaining funding for statutory duties relating to maintained schools only. Academy members may vote on any other Schools Forum business, including the consultation on the funding formula.</p> <p>Non-school members: Non-school members may not vote on de-delegation or the Scheme for Financing Schools. Only PVI representatives can vote on the consultation on the funding formula. All non-school members can vote on any other Schools Forum business.</p> <p>Any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those members voting and present in the room at the same time the question was put.</p> <p>If there are equal numbers for and against, the Chair will have a second or casting vote.</p> <p>Unless a recorded vote is requested, the Chair will take the vote by a show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the general affirmation of the meeting.</p>
3.	<p>Powers and Responsibilities of the Schools Forum</p>
3.1	<p>The Forum is both a consultative and decision-making body. Decision making responsibilities include: de-delegation from mainstream schools' budgets; creating and agreeing the criteria for any fund for significant pupil growth and /or falling rolls; agreeing other centrally retained budgets, including for LA statutory responsibilities</p> <p>Areas where the LA must consult the Schools Forum include: amendments to the school funding formula; arrangements for 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 early years provision.</p> <p>The Department for Education (DfE) table which provides an overview guide to the current main powers and responsibilities of the Forum as at September 2017 can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-forums-operational-and-good-practice-guide-2015</p> <p>The Forum has a duty to report to school governing bodies on the consultation in which it has been involved.</p>

4.	Conduct of Meetings/Expenses
4.1	<p>Meeting Schedule</p> <p>Meetings of the Forum will be scheduled for the academic year and agreed by the Forum in advance.</p> <p>The Forum must meet at least four times a year. Frequency and timing of meetings will take into account statutory requirements and the annual financial cycle. It is likely that there will be five or six meetings per year.</p> <p>A Work Programme will be determined for the year and updated throughout the year as necessary.</p> <p>These arrangements may be changed by a quorate meeting of the Forum.</p>
4.2	<p>Public Access to Meetings and Confidentiality</p> <p>Meetings of the Forum shall be open to the public. Any member of the public may attend but may only ask questions or join in the discussion if specifically asked to do so by the Chair.</p> <p>The Chair may require that an item of business is considered by the Forum in private and may therefore exclude the press and public. Any such items will normally be taken at the end of the agenda.</p> <p>Agendas, reports and minutes will be made available to the public by being published promptly on the Slough Borough Council website.</p>
4.3	<p>Task Groups</p> <p>The Forum will agree to establish, as and when appropriate, task related sub-groups to discuss specific issues, and to produce draft advice and decisions for the Forum itself to consider. These groups can, where it is considered appropriate, include wider representation to ensure that the necessary expertise is included in the group.</p>
4.4	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Forum members must declare an interest in any agenda items where the outcome may give them a personal advantage or avoid disadvantage (pecuniary or non-pecuniary).</p>
4.5	<p>Expenses and Budget</p> <p>The Forum maintains a budget which is used, for example, to commission research and to provide training; provide agreed and reasonable expenses for members attending meetings, the costs of producing and distributing papers; room hire and refreshments and for clerking of meetings.</p>
4.6	<p>Feedback:</p> <p>Members will commit to feeding back to and from their constituent groups. After each meeting a brief report will be circulated by the Chair and Vice Chair to all Schools Forum members and to all schools and academies. This will include key decisions and will draw attention to relevant minutes.</p>
4.7	<p>Minutes of meetings</p> <p>Agendas, reports and minutes (once approved by a meeting of the Forum) will be placed on the Slough Borough Council website.</p>

PROCESS CHART FOR SBC SCHOOLS FORUM

