Bristol Schools Forum
Training Seminar,
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People Directorate
An independent statutory body set up and supported by Bristol City Council (the Local Authority (LA))

Bristol’s Schools Forum programmes six meetings in the year

The Forum is primarily a consultative body which considers and advises on proposals made by the LA, but it does have some decision-making responsibilities
Composition of The Schools Forum

- There is no maximum or minimum size of a Schools Forum
- LAs have discretion in setting the composition of the Schools Forum in order to accommodate local priorities and practice
- There are three categories of member:
  - schools members
  - academies member(s) if there is at least one academy in the local authority’s area
  - non-schools members
Composition of The Schools Forum

- Schools and academies’ (including free schools) representatives on the forum should be roughly proportionate to the number of pupils in each sector and would generally include representatives from each sector.

- Where there is at least one school in a particular category, there must be at least one representative for that group on the forum.
Members of the Forum

- Schools Forum members will need the skills and competencies to manage Forum business, and to take a strategic view of provision across the City, whilst acting as representative of the group that has elected them.
- Members should be easily contactable and active in raising the profile of issues and communicating Forum decisions and the reasons behind them.
Elections of members of the Forum

- There must be a transparent and representative process by which members of Schools Forums are nominated and elected.

- Appropriate support to each group or sub-group to manage their election processes from the clerk of the Forum (or the committee/democratic services of the LA).

- This may just be the provision of advice but may also consist of administrative support in running the elections themselves.
Schools members

- Schools members represent specified phases or types of local authority maintained schools.
- As a minimum, Schools Forums must contain representatives of two groups of schools: primary and secondary schools, unless there are no primary or secondary schools maintained by the LA.
- Special schools the Schools Forum must have at least one schools member from that sector. The same applies to nursery schools and pupil referral units (PRUs).
- Head teachers can be represented by other senior members of staff within their school.
Academies members must be elected by the proprietor bodies of the academies in the local authority’s area, and they are probably best placed to determine the process.

Academies members are there to represent the proprietor bodies of academies and are, therefore, not necessarily restricted to principals, senior staff or governors.
Non-schools members

- Non-schools members may make up no more than a third of a Schools Forum's total membership.

- The purpose of non-schools members is to bring greater breadth of discussion to Schools Forum meetings and ensure that stakeholders and partners other than schools are represented.
Organisations which typically provide non-schools members are trades unions, professional associations and representatives of youth groups.

A representative of providers of 16-19 education must be elected from those providers.

The local authority must appoint at least one person to represent early years providers from the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector.
Bristol’s Schools Forum

Schools Group – 27 members

- Primary schools 14 (8 LA/6 Academy)
- Secondary schools 8 (2 LA/6 Academy)
- Nursery schools 2
- Special schools 2
- PRU 1

Non-schools group 6 (RTPA, 14-19 partnership, PVI, Dioceses (2), Support staff)
Role of the Schools Forum

The Forum must be consulted on:

- Amendments to the funding formula for the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)
- The letting of contracts of a value above the specified EU limit, where funded from schools budget
- The allocation of central government grants to schools and academies
The Forum must be consulted on:

- Financial issues relating to:
  - arrangements for pupils with SEN
  - pupil referral units
  - education otherwise than at school
  - early years provision
The Schools Forum decides on de-delegation of budgets for mainstream schools for:

- contingencies
- administration of free school meals
- insurances, licences, subscriptions
- TU Facility time and maternity cover
- support for black and minority ethnic pupils
- Support for under-achieving groups of pupils
- behaviour support services
- library and museum services
The Schools Forum decides central expenditure on:

- admissions and servicing of the Schools Forum
- capital expenditure funded from revenue
- Costs of (prudential) borrowing
- contributions to combined budgets
- termination of employment costs
- SEN transport
- Places in independent schools (non-SEN)
- early years
- equal pay – back pay
- Any central expenditure deficit carried forward to be funded from the schools budget
The Schools Forum also decides growth funding for:

- basic need
- meeting infant class regulations
- significant pre-16 pupil number growth

and, funding for falling rolls/surplus places in good or outstanding schools to meet expected population growth.
The protected schools budget

Dedicated schools grant

Schools block
- Core funding for all pupils in mainstream schools;
- Extra funding for pupils with specific needs/characteristics;
- Lump sum and sparsity funding, and centrally retained budgets and funding that schools can delegate to the LA to pay for services that are provided centrally

High needs block
- ‘Top-up’ funding for high needs pupils and students aged up to 25 in all settings;
- Place funding for specialist and post-16 settings;
- Funding for alternative provision;
- Funding for pupils receiving hospital education; and
- Centrally retained high needs budgets

Early years block
- 15 hours/week for 3 and 4 year olds;
- Early years pupil premium for eligible 3 and 4 year olds accessing the entitlement;
- 15 hours a week for 40% most deprived 2 year olds;
- Funding for children with SEN in early years settings

LAs can move money between these blocks locally

Pupil premium
Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils

Other specific funding streams

Education services grant
Funding for LAs for education services provided to all, or just maintained school pupils; and funding to academies to provide the equivalent services themselves.

Specific grants for schools
Additional revenue funding allocated for specific commitments outside the DSG and protected budget

Additional academies funding
Pre/post-opening grants for new converters, sponsored academies and new free schools, and protections for open academies against severe drops in funding.
Good Practice and Information