

Schools Forum 11 December 2007

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Membership of Schools Forums - School, Early Years and 14-16 Funding Arrangements 2008-11

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Schools Forum of the requirements of the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 relating to the membership of Schools Forums, and to consider the creation of additional member posts in order to meet the new requirements.

Budget Working Group Discussed

2. No. Changes required as a result of the Regulations are statutory.

Action for Schools Forum

3. To review the constitution of membership to reflect the DCSF changes to members of the Schools Forums to bring a wider expertise to support those funding reforms.

Attachments to Report

4. Appendix A and Ai- Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007.
5. Appendix B – Revised Schools Forum membership proposed for 2008.

Karen Cocker
Children's Services Finance Manager
26 November 2007

Schools Forum 11 December 2007

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Membership of Schools Forums - School, Early Years and 14-16 Funding Arrangements 2008-2011

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Schools Forum of the requirements of the Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 relating to the membership of Schools Forums, and to consider the creation of additional member posts in order to meet the new requirements.

Background

2. The DCSF issued draft regulations in September 2007, which will be laid before Parliament before 1 April 2008. (Appendix A). These regulations will amend the School Forums Regulations 2002 as already amended by the Schools Forums (Amendment) Regulations 2004 and the Schools Forums (Amendment) 2005 Regulations (Appendix Ai).
3. The changes cover the following:

Part 1:

New definitions have been added for local authority 14-19 partnerships and PVI providers and also for senior members of staff.

Local authority 14-19 partnership" means an informal partnership arrangement comprising a local authority, the LSC and other providers of education, advice and information services for 14-19 year olds in the local authority area. The function of such partnerships is to facilitate collaboration between providers in order to maximise participation in learning and improve educational attainment for 14-19 year olds;

PVI providers" means private, voluntary and independent providers of nursery education for three and four year olds, other than primary schools, which is free at the point of delivery.

Senior member of staff” means the principal, head teacher, deputy head teacher, assistant head teacher, bursar or person responsible for the financial management of a maintained school.

Part 2

Regulation 3 (2) allows non-schools members to comprise up to one third of the schools forum membership. This is a change from the previous regulations which allowed only one fifth of members to be non schools representatives.

Regulation 4 allows for schools representatives to be senior members of school staff (where they used to have to be headteachers).

Regulation 5 (1) says that where local authorities have decided to have non schools members, they must now appoint non schools members from bodies representing 14-19 partnership and Early Years providers.

Regulation 5 (4) a and b provide that where local authorities have faith schools they must consider seeking nominations from the Diocesan Board of Education, Bishop or other appropriate relevant bodies. The regulations used to say that local authorities must consider nominations from only the Church of England or Catholic bodies, these have now been widened to include consideration of, for example, Muslim bodies if an authority has a maintained Muslim school.

Regulation 5 (4A) says that where local authorities have non schools members on their Forum at present they must find representatives of the 14-19 partnership and PVI providers before 1st February 2008.

Regulation 6 (11) says that local authorities must consult their Forum on arrangements for allowing substitutes for schools members and non schools members and implement arrangements having taken account of the views of the Forum. Essentially, the exact method of allowing Forum substitutes is for agreement between the LA and its Forum.

4. The current membership of the Forum includes 27 members; 22 school and 5 non-school members. The DCSF is now proposing that Forums have at least two-thirds school members where at present Forums must have at least four-fifths school members. These changes allow the Forums to add new representatives for Early Years PVI (private, voluntary and independent) and 14-19 Partnership therefore increasing the membership.
5. The proposal for Dudley at this stage is to offer two new places for non-school members and this retains the ‘at least two-thirds schools members’ regulation without any further changes. It is proposed that one place is allocated to Early Years to achieve representation of full day care, sessional day care and breakfast and after school clubs and one place for the 14-19 Partnership. This may be an interim arrangement and will be reviewed during 2008/09 to ensure that the representation fairly covers these two wide reaching areas.

6. It is recommended that the two additional Schools Forum representatives are nominated from the Early Years Provider Reference Group and the 14-19 Strategic Partnership before 1 February 2008, with membership commencing at the next Schools Forum meeting on 5 February 2008.
7. Forum members will be aware that the existing constitution allows for representation of one member from the Dudley Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, nominated by the Partnership. As this group no longer exists and has been replaced by the Children and Young Peoples Partnership (C&YPP), the Forum is seeking a nomination from the C&YPP to represent this vacant position.
8. The revised constitution recommended would increase the Forum to 29 members; 22 school and 7 non school.
9. This would bring the revised structure of Schools Forum in line with DCSF regulations; details as shown in Appendix B.

Finance

10. The funding of schools is prescribed by the DCSF through the School Finance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2007.
11. Schools Forums are regulated by the School Forums Regulations 2002 as already amended by the Schools Forums (Amendment) Regulations 2004 and the Schools Forums (Amendment) 2005 Regulations.
12. From 1st April 2006, the Schools Budget will be funded by a direct DCSF grant: Dedicated School Grant (DSG).

Law

13. Councils' LMS Schemes are made under Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education Acts 1996 and 2002 also have provisions relating to school funding.

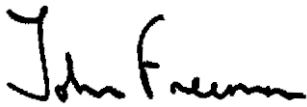
Equality Impact

14. The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy is taken into account when considering the allocation of resources.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that in order to comply with the *draft* Schools Forums (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007:

- One new Forum post be created for a representative of the Early Years Provider Reference Group;
- One new Forum post be created for a representative of the 14-19 Strategic Partnership;
- The arrangements relating to the substitution of members is agreed and documented in accordance with Regulation 6;
- The Constitution and Terms of Reference of the Forum be amended to reflect the changes in membership arrangements, subject to formal approval by the Cabinet member for Children's Services.



John Freeman

Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer:

Karen Cocker, Children's Services Finance Manager

Karen.cocker@dudley.gov.uk Tel: 01384 815382

Richard Jewkes, Democratic Services Officer,

Richard.jewkes@dudley.gov.uk Tel. 01384 818116