

Wiltshire Council

Schools Forum

18 June 2015

Proportionality Review of the Wiltshire Schools Forum

Executive summary

Following a review of the Wiltshire Schools Forum membership and the pupil numbers on roll at schools across Wiltshire it is apparent that Primary Academies have 10.947% of pupil numbers on roll (as of October 2014). There is also one special academy within the county.

Through examining national guidance for Schools Forums it has become apparent that as a result of these findings there should be extra positions made available on the Wiltshire Schools Forum.

Proposal

That the committee:

a) Recommends to the relevant Cabinet Member that two additional membership spaces be created for a Primary Academy and a Special Academy representative through delegated authority.

Reason for proposal

As of October 2014 Primary Academies in Wiltshire have 10.947% of the pupil numbers on roll across the county and no representation on the Wiltshire Schools Forum.

National guidance for Schools Forums states that Where there is at least one school in a particular category, there must be at least one representative for that group on the forum. Currently there is one special academy within Wiltshire, but no representation on the Wiltshire Schools Forum.

Author: Adam Brown (Democratic Services Officer)

Contact details: adam.brown@wiltshire.gov.uk / 01225718038

Purpose of report

1. The report draws the attention of the Schools Forum to the current proportionality its membership. It recommends that in light of the proportionality review's findings that two extra positions on the Schools Forum should be made available. It is recommended that one position be made available for a primary academy representative, and one for a special academy representative.

Background

2. In the light of more schools converting into academies across Wiltshire a proportionality review was carried out.
3. The review aimed to examine the number of representatives on the Wiltshire Schools Forum from each educational body, including:
 - a. Primary Schools;
 - b. Secondary Schools;
 - c. Special Schools;
 - d. Special Academies;
 - e. Primary Academies;
 - f. Secondary Academies.
4. Information on pupil numbers was taken from the October 2014 numbers on roll census data (NOR).
5. The decision to change the size of the Wiltshire Schools Forum lies with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services through the delegated decision process:
 - a. Section 2.1 of the Wiltshire Schools Forum Terms of Reference:
 - b. The constitution of the Wiltshire Schools Forum has been approved by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services through the delegated decision process, and any change to the constitution will require similar approval.

Main considerations for the committee

6. From the data it was found that primary Academies have 10.947% of the total pupils on roll across Wiltshire and no representation on the Wiltshire Schools Forum.
7. Paragraph 17 of Schools Forum: Operational and Good Practice Guide (March 2015) states:
 - a. There is no maximum or minimum size of a schools forum. Authorities will wish to take various issues into account in deciding the actual size, including the need to have full representation for various types of school, and the local authority's policy on representation of non-schools members. However, care should be taken to keep the schools forum to a reasonable size to ensure that it does not become too unwieldy.
8. Paragraph 19 of Schools Forum: Operational and Good Practice Guide (March 2015) states:
 - a. the balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies members must be broadly proportionate to the pupil numbers in each category
9. There is currently one special academy school within Wiltshire: Springfields Academy. Currently special academies have no representation on the Forum.
10. Schools forum: a Guide for Schools and Academies (March 2015) states:

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

Environmental impact of the proposal

11. None

Equality and diversity impact of the proposal

12. The recommendation aims to tackle the lack of representation from primary academy schools and special academies at the Wiltshire Schools Forum.

Risk assessment

13. If school categories are not represented on the Schools Forum then decisions made by the Committee may not take into enough consideration their views when deciding actions which will affect them.

Financial implications

14. None

Legal implications

15. The creation of the extra representatives for primary academies and special academies will mean that the Wiltshire Schools Forum will be adhering to the following obligations:
 - a. Schools and academies' (including free schools) representatives on the forum should be roughly proportionate to the number of pupils in each sector.
 - b. Where there is at least one school in a particular category, there must be at least one representative for that group on the forum.

Conclusion

16. That the Schools Forum recommends to the relevant Cabinet Member that two additional membership spaces be created for a primary academy and a special academy representative through delegated authority.
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Background papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

Numbers on Roll (October 2014)

Appendices

Appendix 1: School Forum Proportionality Review

Appendix 2: Schools Forum: Operational and Good Practice Guide (March 2015)

Appendix 3: Wiltshire Schools Forum Terms of Reference

Schools forum: a Guide for Schools and Academies (March 2015):
<https://www.gov.uk/schools-forum-a-guide-for-schools-and-academies#further-information>