

Kirklees Schools Forum

CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE – July 2025

BACKGROUND, PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

The Kirklees Schools Forum is operated in accordance with the Department for Education and Skills 'Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012' which lays down the statutory instruments in respect of the establishment of the forum, membership, and constitutional, procedural and administrative matters. The regulations were updated in 2020 to allow remote meetings to take place.

The purpose of the Kirklees Schools Forum is to provide unambiguous professional advice and strategic direction from Headteachers to education decision-makers regarding the funding of schools. The forum is a representative group of service providers who are required to use the variety of funding streams to ensure coherent educational provision for children and young people to maximise the positive impact of funding on the quality of teaching & learning and standards.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1. The Kirklees Schools Forum provides a formal channel of communication between Kirklees LA and schools and serves as the principal mechanism for consultation and decision making relating to the funding of schools.
- 1.2. The Forum consults on any proposed changes to the school funding formula, and specifically any changes in relation to the factors and criteria, methods, principles and rules used to calculate schools budgets and the financial effects of any proposed changes.
- 1.3 The Forum acts as a consultative body on issues relating to:
 - Changes to the local funding formula
 - Proposed changes to the operation of the minimum funding guarantee
 - Changes to new contracts affecting schools
 - Arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs, in places commissioned by the LA, in alternative provision and in early years provision, the use of top-up funding and the administration of allocation of central government grants
- 1.4 The Forum is responsible for decisions on:
 - Movement of up to 0.5% from schools block to other blocks
 - The amount of funding to be centrally retained within the Dedicated Schools Grant
 - Proposed carry forward of deficits on central spend from one year to the next

- Proposals for de-delegation of funding from maintained primary and secondary schools (by relevant maintained school members)
- Changes to the scheme of financial management
- Central spend on pupil growth and falling role funds
- Voting procedures
- Election of a Chair of schools forum

MEMBERSHIP

General

2. There is no maximum or minimum size of a schools forum. However, the forum will be kept to a reasonable size in order to ensure that it does not become too unwieldy. The membership shall be divided into school and non-school members, ensuring fair representation across all phases including special schools, early learning providers, alternative provision and Governors.
3. The non-school members will constitute a maximum of one-third of the total membership of the Forum to represent PVI providers of early learning and childcare, teaching unions, and Post 16 providers.
4. The schools members, who are drawn from existing schools and academies, must number at least two-thirds of the total membership of the schools forum. The balance between maintained primary, maintained secondary and academies must be broadly proportionate to the pupils in each category (confirmed by an annual review of pupil numbers). There is no requirement for academies members to represent specific primary and secondary phases, but where possible, representation in this category will remain broadly proportionate to pupil numbers. Of the total number of places available on the Forum for school members there shall be one representative each for governors, special schools, alternative provision, and nursery schools.
5. Kirklees Council elected members, including the Portfolio Holder for Education, are invited to attend meetings but may not be appointed as a member of the Forum. Other interested parties may be invited to attend meetings.. A representative from the Department for Education (DfE) may attend as an observer and participate in discussions to support the local process and provide a national perspective.
6. The Local Authority is represented by an officer nominated by the Executive Director for Children and Families and a finance representative nominated by the Chief Finance Officer. Additional officers attend, as invited, to contribute to discussion or set agenda items.

7. The composition and membership of the Kirklees Schools Forum is available online on the Kirklees Council Schools Forum website. All representatives or nominatives shall be appointed as members for an initial term of three years, which may subsequently be reviewed through re-election or re-nomination in a subsequent process.

8. Election and nomination of maintained schools members:

The nomination for maintained schools members will be managed by relevant members of Kirklees Primary Heads, Kirklees High School Heads and Kirklees Special School Heads. If there are more nominations than available vacancies the Local Authority will undertake a voting process where each constituent school has one vote. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates, then the Local Authority must appoint the schools member instead.

There will be at least one member per subgroup of schools.

There is one maintained nursery school and the Headteacher is entitled to be a member of Schools Forum.

The Local Authority will appoint a maintained school governor as a schools member.

9. Election and nomination of academy members:

Academies members must be elected by the proprietor bodies of the academies in the local authority's area. Academies members are there to represent the proprietor bodies of academies and are, therefore, not necessarily restricted to principals, senior staff or governors. It is not appropriate, therefore, for headteacher phase groups to determine representation unless the academy proprietors have agreed.

There is no requirement for academies members to be split into primary and secondary subgroups. However, decision makers are encouraged to consider the pupil proportions across all academies when electing their representatives.

When a vacancy occurs for an academy member of schools forum the Local Authority will write to all Single Academy Trusts and Multi-Academy Trusts with an academy in the area requesting nominations along with a pen portrait of the nominee by a specific deadline. If there are more nominees than vacancies, the Local Authority will invite Single and Multi-Academy Trusts to vote for their preferred nominee on the basis of one vote per Trust.

There is a requirement to have a least one special school academy member. In the case of a special school academy vacancy, nominations and voting will be restricted to Single and Multi-Academy Trust with special school academy located in Kirklees.

There is one Multi-Academy Trust with state funded Alternative Provision academies in Kirklees who will be entitled to nominate an academy member. (Previously, pupil referral units)

10. Non-school members

The purpose of non-schools members is also to bring greater breadth of discussion to schools forum meetings and ensure that stakeholders and partners other than schools are represented.

The Local Authority will appoint non-school members recognising it cannot appoint:

- an elected member of the local authority who is appointed to the executive of that local authority
- The Director of Children's Services or any officer employed or engaged to work under the management of the Director of Children's Services, and who does not directly provide education to children (or manage those who do)
- other officers with a specific role in management of and/or who advise on funding for schools

A non-school member representing Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) early years providers will be appointed by the Local Authority who will ideally be a member of the Kirklees Early Years Reference Group to help ensure effective communication and representation.

11. Other membership matters

It's not appropriate for a single person to be elected to represent more than one group or sub-group concurrently, for instance, if they were a governor at a primary and secondary school. They can stand for election from either group but can be appointed to represent only one of those groups.

The local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and must appoint the schools member if the election has not taken place by that date. The person appointed should be a member of the relevant group.

Existing members can stand for re-election at the end of their term of office or if their circumstances change i.e. if they can no longer represent the group they were

elected to represent but there is a vacancy in a group they are now eligible to represent.

In the case of school members and academy members, the local authority may set a date by which the election should take place and will appoint a suitable member if the election does not take place by that date, or if an election results in a tie between two or more candidates.

12. The role of executive elected members

A schools forum needs to ensure that there are systems in place for executive members of the Council to be aware of its views on specific issues and, in particular, any decisions it takes in relation to the Schools Budget and individual budget shares.

Executive members with responsibility for education/children's services or resources of the local authority are able to participate in schools forum meetings. By doing so such elected members are able to contribute to the discussion and receive first-hand the views of the schools forum: it is clearly good practice for this to be the case and the regulations provide the right for executive members to attend and speak at schools forum meetings. However, there is no requirement for this to happen.

ADMINISTRATION

13. The clerking and officer support arrangements for Kirklees Schools Forum are provided through the appointed representatives from Council Finance and Children and Families Service

14. Forum meeting papers (current and past) are available online on the Schools Forum webpage [Browse meetings - Kirklees Schools Forum | Kirklees Council](#). Agendas and minutes are available 5 working days before each public meeting, and circulated to all members electronically.

CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

15. Timing and Frequency of Meetings

Public meetings of the Forum will take place on at least three occasions per year/one occasion per term. However, the volume of business may require meetings to take place more frequently. The dates, times and Venues of public meetings are published on the Schools Forum webpage.

16. Quorum

For Schools Forum to be quorate, 40% of members must be present. Inquorate meetings may proceed, but any key decisions may be deferred to a future meeting to ensure full representation of views.

17. Substitution

Members of the Forum may nominate appropriate substitutes, representing the same group of providers, to attend meetings in their place in the event that they are unable to attend themselves. Substitutions for school representatives can only be by headteachers from the same constituent group.

18. Voting procedures

The decisions and recommendations required of the Kirklees Schools Forum will be contained in the relevant written report and agreed at the start of discussion. The Forum aims to arrive at such decisions and recommendations by actively building a consensus around a proposed course of action.

There are certain voting restrictions in the regulations governing Schools Forum. Voting on:

- The funding formula is limited to schools members, academies members and PVI representatives
- De-delegation is limited to the specific primary and secondary phase of maintained schools members
- Retaining funding for statutory duties relating to maintained schools only is limited to maintained primary, secondary, special and PRU members

Withing these restrictions there will be one vote per eligible school member. In the event of an equal vote the Chair of the meeting will have the casting vote except in the case of De-delegation and retained funding for statutory duties decisions where a vote will be deferred to allow further discussion with constituent groups.

19. Urgent business

The need for urgent business outside the scheduled of Schools Forum meeting will be avoided if possible. However, if an urgent decision is required, in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair of schools Forum the Local Authority may arrange an unscheduled meeting (online or face to face) or seek a decision by e-mail correspondence.

20. Declarations of Interest

Schools Forum members should, for reasons of probity, be aware of circumstances in which they should withdraw from meetings due to a conflict of personal interest.

21. Right of Attendance

Kirklees School Forum Public Meetings are open to all. The Forum may also invite, by agreement, individuals to attend a meeting to provide information or reports. Visitors should be asked to leave if confidential items are discussed, unless the Forum have asked them to take part in a specific discussion. Additional briefing meetings may be called to enable discussion on detailed areas of funding in line with the DfE timetable for the submission of information.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

22. Election of Chair / Vice Chair

The Forum shall elect a chair and vice chair by a majority of votes cast on an annual basis at the first meeting in the academic year. The term of office of the chair will run until the first meeting in the following academic year

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

23. Sub Groups

The Kirklees Schools Forum may establish sub groups and/or working groups on an adhoc basis for the consideration of specific matters as it deems necessary and shall decide upon the terms of reference for such groups and on additional individuals to invite as deemed necessary. The Forum shall consider the work of such sub groups or Working Groups and shall make decisions or recommendations to the LA as appropriate.

24. Kirklees Schools Forum budget / members' expenses

Forum determines the annual budget for meeting costs and support, and reimburses all reasonable expenses incurred by members engaged in the work of the Forum.

25. ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW AND REVISION

Review of Terms of Reference:

The Terms of Reference are reviewed annually at the start of the new academic year, and more frequently as national changes and regulations require.