

North Yorkshire Schools Forum

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Schools Forum?

Schools Forums were established under the Education Act 2002 to provide schools with greater involvement in the distribution of funding within their local authority and to act as a consultative and advisory body in relation to schools' funding.

2. Who determines the make-up and responsibilities of the Schools Forum in North Yorkshire?

National regulations govern the composition, constitution and procedures of Schools Forums. They also prescribe the main functions upon which local authorities must consult their Forums. The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2261) can be found on the DfE website via the following link:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schools/revenuefunding/schoolsforums/a0014311/schools-forums>

The membership structure is designed to effectively reflect the profile of education provision across the Authority.

The Forum is chaired by one of its members, having been nominated and elected by the other members of the Forum. Local Authority officers cannot chair the Forum but will attend to present reports and provide advice.

3. What does the Forum do?

The Forum meets to discuss issues relating to the funding arrangements pertaining to North Yorkshire schools. These meetings are set to coincide with key budget decision-making dates. The Forum is presented with information and proposals by officers of the Council. The outcome of discussion may result in the proposals being either supported, deferred pending further work (at the request of the Forum) or rejected.

Supported proposals are then taken forward for wider consultation with all schools before final proposals are submitted to the Council Executive for implementation.

Deferred and rejected proposals are redeveloped or abandoned.

Key areas for consultation include:

- Changes to the schools funding formula;
- Terms of contracts to be let by the Local Authority for services to schools and paid for from the schools budget; and
- Issues relating to the management of the schools and high needs budgets including arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs, the use of pupil referral units and the education of children other than at school, early years education, revisions to the LMS Scheme for the Financing of Schools and the administration of central government grants to schools.

4. How is my school represented on the Forum?

All North Yorkshire's schools are represented on the Schools Forum. The Forum has 33 members and include the following:

School Members:

- Primary Headteachers (8)
- Secondary Headteachers (7)
- Nursery Headteacher/Governor (1)
- Special School Headteacher/Governor (1)
- Academies (1)
- Pupil Referral Service (1)
- Primary Governors (5)
- Secondary Governors (3)

Non-School Members:

- Roman Catholic Diocese (1)
- Diocese of York (2)
- Teaching Staff Union (1)
- Unison (1)
- Early Years Providers (1)
- 14-19 Partnership (1)

The current membership can be found at Item 1 alongside the agenda and papers for the most recent meeting of the Schools Forum via this link

<http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17693>.

Your school will be represented by a headteacher and/or governor as well as your Diocese, where applicable, and the trade unions.

Members are there to reflect the views and opinions of the schools they represent and, as such, can be contacted by or will themselves make contact with Headteachers/Governors direct. For example, a secondary phase Headteacher of an 11-16 age range school would be expected to consult the Headteachers of those schools in their area with a sixth form on agenda issues relating to post 16.

Should you wish to make your views known on a particular issue under discussion you are advised to make contact with your representative on the Forum.

5. How do I know what the Schools Forum is doing?

The Schools Forum agendas, reports and minutes can be found on the cyps.info website at <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17693>. These clearly document the issues that the Schools Forum is consulted on.

Your representative member on the Forum is also a source of information.

6. How can I get involved in the Schools Forum?

When a vacancy arises, information will be posted on the Red Bag on the cyps.info website (<http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=14491>). This is the Local Authority's main means of communication with schools.

Nominations will be sought for vacancies and it is your opportunity then to get involved as a member of the Schools Forum.

The current membership list (see Q4 above) highlights when individual memberships are due to expire.

In addition, the Schools Forum often delegates work to a sub-group or working group of the Forum. Although Forum members are involved in these groups, other schools are able to nominate a member of their staff to join the group. Such invitations will be made via the Red Bag. These groups report back to the Forum on the work undertaken and any proposals that have been developed.

You can always keep up to date with the Schools Forum by going to the cyps.info website. All agendas, reports and minutes can be found at <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17693>. Papers from the current calendar year plus the previous two are on the website. If you are looking for a report that pre-dates these you should contact the Clerk to the Schools Forum direct.

7. Who monitors the Schools Forum?

The Education Funding Agency has since October 2012 held observer status on all School Forums. Each region has a named contact that will support the local process and provide a national perspective. In North Yorkshire, we have been pleased to support this change and establish a positive relationship with the Yorkshire and Humberside contact who was invited to the first Forum meeting after this change was introduced. Due to commitments we do not expect them to attend every meeting of the Forum but they will be invited when an EFA perspective is required on a particular subject. The EFA also has access to the Schools Forum information on the cyps.info website.

The EFA will investigate any complaints from Forum members, maintained schools or academies that cannot be resolved satisfactorily at a Local Authority level in relation to either the operation of the Forum or funding issues with which the Forum is consulted upon.

8. When does the Forum meet?

The Forum meets at least five times in a calendar year in January, March, May, September and November. The meetings last approximately 2 hours. Additional meetings are held in response to need.

9. Where can I get further information on the Schools Forum?

Further information on Schools Forum can be found on the DfE website at

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schools/revenuefunding/schoolsforums/a0014311/schools-forums>

Further information on the North Yorkshire Schools Forum can be found on the cyps.info website at

<http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=13901>

or by contacting the Clerk to the Schools Forum, Jayne Laver, on 01609 534416 or Jayne.laver@northyorks.gov.uk