



ELECTION OF STAFF COUNCILLORS

Endeavour Learning Trust

1. INTRODUCTION

ELT is responsible for the organisation of Staff Councillor Elections and any enquiry or dispute shall be dealt with and, if necessary, determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

Responsibility for the conduct of Staff Councillor Elections in an individual academy is delegated to the Head of School/Headteacher, as returning officer, and elections shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.

2. NUMBER OF STAFF COUNCILLORS

Each Local Academy Council (LAC) will have one member of staff as Academy Councillor in addition to the Executive Headteacher/Headteacher/s and Head of school where appropriate.

A "Staff Councillor" is

- a) a person who is elected as an Academy Councillor by staff with a contract within the MAT and who is himself/herself staff when elected, or
- c) a person appointed as a Staff Councillor (specific circumstances apply to this)

Supply staff, or those working at the academy on a casual basis, are not eligible to stand in staff councillor elections.

Both teaching and support staff are eligible to stand as Academy Councillors in every election.

3. ELIGIBILITY TO STAND FOR ELECTION AS A STAFF COUNCILLOR AND TO PARTICIPATE IN STAFF COUNCILLOR ELECTIONS

Anyone who has a contract of employment with ELT is eligible to stand for election as a Staff Councillor.

The term of office of any staff councillor will come to an end immediately they cease to be an employee of ELT.

The Executive Headteacher, Headteacher (s) and Head of School are ex officio staff councillors, but can choose whether or not to take up the positions.

The maximum number of staff councillors must not, when counted with any existing staff councillor and the headteacher, exceed one third of the total number of councillors.

Each member of staff shall have one vote per vacancy. Meetings of the Local Academy Council shall be quorate if three Local Academy Councillors are present, subject to staff members not being in the majority.

4. PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF A VACANCY

Send a letter, using email where possible, to everyone who is known to be a member of staff. The letter should include the following information:

- Number of vacancies to be filled
- Nomination form
- Where to get additional copies of the nomination form, if required (e.g. school office)
- Closing date for the return of nomination forms to the school (**a minimum of seven days from the date of the letter**)

Staff may nominate themselves. However if a member of staff is nominated by another staff, the nominee must sign to indicate acceptance of the nomination. There is no requirement for the nomination to be seconded.

As nomination forms are received check that they have been signed by the proposer and/or nominee. If any signature is missing the nomination form will be returned forthwith to either of the member of staff who has nominated themselves, or the proposer.

The Head of School/ Headteacher must ensure before any election is called, that every person nominated and every proposer is a member of staff working regularly at the academy at which the election is being held.

If the number of nominations received is equal to, or fewer than, the number of vacancies, then there is no need to hold an election and those nominated should be declared elected and procedures recommenced for filling any remaining vacancy or vacancies. In such cases, an email should immediately be sent to staff advising them of the names of candidates elected.

Where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, it will be necessary to reproduce enough copies of the personal statement and of the standard ballot paper sent with these notes to enable each staff to have one copy.

Send a letter to every staff to include the following:

- One ballot paper per member of staff plus personal statements. Ballot papers must not be marked in any way which could lead to the identification of the voter, nor should the voter sign anything attached to the ballot paper
- closing date for the return of ballot papers to the academy (**minimum seven days from the date of despatch of the ballot papers**)
- information on location of ballot box where voting papers may be placed by staff returning them personally, e.g. in academy office or reception area.

All ballot papers, regardless of how they are returned, must be put in a secure ballot box (which must be locked away at night) and not removed until the time of the count.

Voting by proxy will not be allowed i.e. if a member of staff is for any reason unable personally to vote (e.g. because s/he is away on business or on holiday), it will not be possible for the staff to make arrangements for another person to vote on her/his behalf.

Duplicate ballot papers should only be issued if the staff member completes a letter verifying that the original was not received or has been lost, and that s/he will vote only once in the election and will destroy the original ballot paper if found.

5. COUNTING THE VOTE

The electoral method is first-past-the-post.

The Head of School/ Headteacher, as returning officer, is responsible for counting the votes and for deciding the validity of dubious or spoilt voting papers.

The Head of School/ Headteacher should not undertake this task without witnesses (any member of staff or Local Academy Council who does not have a personal interest in the outcome of the voting may act as witness).

Votes must not be counted or removed from the secure ballot box until after the closing date.

Depending on the number of vacancies, the candidate or candidates gaining the most votes should be declared elected.

If the number of votes cast for any two or more candidates differs by less than five there should be an automatic recount.

Certain ties will not be important, e.g. if there are four Staff Councillor places and two candidates tie for first, second or third places, then both should be declared elected.

In the event of a tie for the only or last remaining place to be filled the votes should be recounted and in the event of the result being confirmed the candidates with equal votes should be invited to come to be interviewed by the Local Academy Council in order that the most suitable candidate can be invited to join the board

6. AFTER THE ELECTION

The clerk to the LAC should be advised of the result immediately in order that letters of appointment and other relevant information may be sent to the successful candidate(s).

The Head of School/ Headteacher is required to notify the Academy Councillors and the staff of the result of the election.

Details of the number of ballot papers issued and returned should be recorded and ballot papers retained securely for six months after the date of the election in case the result is challenged.

7. APPOINTED STAFF COUNCILLORS

Academies must make every reasonable effort to fill Staff Councillor vacancies through elections. Only if insufficient staff stand for election can the Local Academy Council appoint a member of the staff who has not nominated themselves earlier in the process.