

## **BIRMINGHAM'S CITYWIDE EDUCATION BOARD - TERMS OF REFERENCE 2024-2025**

**Agreed on: XX/XX/2024**

These terms of reference will be reviewed and ratified annually in the first meeting of the Autumn Term or at the request of the Chair and/or Director of Children's Services.

### **Purpose of the Board**

The mission of the Birmingham Education Board is to promote a joined-up approach to improving education across the city.

Our goal is to ensure the very best educational outcomes for children and young people in Birmingham and we'll achieve this by working together through collaborative and partnership arrangements.

The Education Board applies to all educational settings and does not differentiate between Maintained Schools, Special Schools, Multi-Academy Trusts, Colleges or Alternative Provision (AP). We are all public servants and here to serve children, young people and families and wider communities in Birmingham.

The Education Board will:

- Seek to engage all Birmingham education schools and settings (Post 16 and Early Years maintained and PVI's) in the leadership and oversight of the local education system.
- Have a strategic overview of educational outcomes specifically and facilitate the school-led improvement system.
- Promote best practice to support all schools and education settings in their aim of providing high quality education to their students; and Board members will share risks and suggest mitigation measures to address them.
- Agree to tackle and raise citywide education matters with services, schools and settings, partners, offering challenge and support.
- Seek collaborative advantage and lead the development of Birmingham Education with transparency and kindness.
- Promote inclusion in all settings and aspects of education.
- Establish a data sharing protocol for the city and consistently share data on city wide outcomes, inclusion and attainment in order to find solutions for continuous improvement.
- Engage key stakeholders and authorising environment as appropriate including Governmental Departments, Inspectorates.
- In Year 1 (academic year 24-25), as it becomes established within education governance in the city the Director of Children's Services will chair. From September 2025 the Board will vote in Year 1 whether it would like to nominate an independent chair.

The Board will oversee the development of:

- A vision for an education system that is shaped by schools and settings.
- A self-improving education system, based on formal and informal collaborative partnerships between schools (regardless of type), with collective accountability for the educational outcomes for the city.
- A School improvement strategy for Birmingham.
- Data which supports understanding of outcomes, learning needs and progress.
- Outcomes focused alliances that foster collaboration of all, with the aim of improving outcomes for children, young people and families in Birmingham

The Board aims to support a sustainable self-improving education system in a shared, collaborative culture of educational excellence that recognises those in schools and other providers as equal, trusted partners. It intends to build on existing networks, relationships and local partnerships to ensure that no school is isolated.

To develop and promote a shared strategic vision consistent with Birmingham's vision to create a Child Friendly city, namely:

*'We want Birmingham to be a great place for all of our children and young people to grow up in.  
We want to work together to deliver this; every contribution counts and we can all play a part in making a difference.'*

### **Main Functions of the Board**

The responsibility of all Board members is to engage all Birmingham schools/education settings and services in system improvement and be the practical manifestation of school and education system leadership.

The Board will give school leaders a voice at the highest level in discussing and raising agenda items related to pedagogy, professional development, staff and pupil wellbeing, council and educational change. They will be part of co-producing future council education strategy, policy, practice and wrap around education services in the future.

\*A key role for all Board members including nominated Headteachers is to provide assurance to respective Headteacher groups that they are able to contribute and that school improvement decisions are transparent and evidence based.

To deliver the overarching aims, the members and convenors of the Board will:

1. Provide strategic oversight, support and challenge to all those involved in improving educational outcomes and services to children and make recommendations/request actions to relevant bodies, forums and schools/other educational provisions local meetings as appropriate.
2. Drive the implementation of Birmingham's School Improvement Strategy; identify and encourage areas of strength, evaluate the progress made across the city and identify further actions to ensure continuous improvement at appropriate pace.
3. Agree LA wide priorities and issues of concern and develop systemic approaches to address these.
4. Plan and deliver activities that reduce education inequalities for our vulnerable children in the city.
5. Share information and expertise across Birmingham schools and other education settings; being responsive to the city's contextual variance and any barriers schools and settings are facing so as to ensure continuous improvement across the partnership.
6. Support the brokering of school to school/setting to setting support and commission external support so as to secure the needed expertise to secure improvement process where appropriate. This will include local school leaders, peers, local government association etc.
7. Support the LA in statutory monitoring function and act as an advisory group on school improvement issues to the Birmingham Improvement Partnership Board.
8. Monitor the progress of Local School/Setting Improvement Fund Projects such as DLP until summer 2025.

Expectations of all Board members:

- a) Education Strategy – Board members should constructively challenge and contribute to the development of strategy, reflecting the contributions from school leaders
- b) Standards & Performance – Board members should scrutinise the standards and performance across the city for attendance, attainment and inclusion benchmarking against the best and monitoring performance over time. Holding each other to account for performance.
- c) Risk – Board members should identify risks with the Board so it can be responsive around future school standards and pupil performance, including children's wellbeing, mental and physical health, vulnerability.

## Underpinning Values, Principles and Commitments

### Principles

The Board and any related partnerships or sub-groups will be guided by:

#### 1. The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles) apply to anyone who works as a public officeholder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services. All public officeholders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also apply to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

**1.1 Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

**1.2 Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**1.3 Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**1.4 Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**1.5 Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**1.6 Honesty** - Holders of public office should be truthful.

**1.7 Leadership** - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

## Values

The following principles will guide all the work of the Board:

- a) Children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.
- b) We are ambitious for every child and young person in Birmingham or who belong to Birmingham.
- c) We are one partnership, with one set of shared priorities.
- d) Regardless of role, everything we do sits within the context of a relationship. We must therefore seek to prioritise, develop, nurture and repair professional, socially responsible relationships at all levels.

## Commitments

The Board meets to enable the following commitments:

- a) Provide courageous, collective system leadership.
- b) Create a collaborative and integrated education and school improvement strategy.
- c) Hold each other to account with support, oversight, and challenge.
- d) Base our decision making on what is best for our children, young people and our communities with the best available evidence.
- e) Seek to understand and know any difference we are making.
- f) Take personal account of our own communication practice (and encourage others to do so).

## Birmingham Education System Leadership

### Membership & Responsibilities

#### Board Composition Year 1 academic year 2024-25:

The Chair of the Education Board will for Year 1 be the Director of Children Services. From 2025-26 the Chair will be an independent chair with nominations to be received and accepted by the Board through Board vote.

The Chair (in consultation with Board Members) may appoint an independent Board Member as Vice Chair, whose role will be to support and deputise (where required) for the Chair in the delivery of the Board's objectives. Vice chair nominations to be received and accepted by the Board through Board vote.

The membership of the Board will comprise the widest possible expertise and professional competence across a range of different areas, including school leadership and improvement, policy making, academic research and business.

The Board will be empowered to invite field experts to support agenda items and agree actions and workstreams this includes parents/carers and our children and young people. It is our commitment that pupil/parent/carer views are sought and shared via survey responses, and direct feedback from existing parent groups such as PFA/school parent associations, our children care council etc.

We consider all these crucial and we will particularly emphasise the need for diversity across the membership.

#### Membership and Terms of Office:

Attended by the Chair/representative from each of the Early Years, Primary, Special, Secondary Fora, the Post 16 Executive Board and our Alternative Provision free school nominated representatives, two MAT CEO representatives (one Local and one National), one representative from our maintained nursery school sector, the three Local Authority Children and Families' Directors, the Director of Children's Services, and other external groups as appropriate. Its focus is upon broader issues of strategy, ensuring that support is available to schools that need it and that a clear direction is mapped for the future development of schools.

| ADD IN NAMES AND ROLES | Role |  |
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### **Tenure of Board Members:**

The Chair of the Board will be appointed for a two-year term and may be reappointed at the discretion of the Board.

Headteachers and Education Leaders will be appointed for a three-year term, with the option of reappointment as long as they remain Birmingham Headteachers/Setting Heads or Leaders and they are part of their local network system.

Any assessment of the attendance, attainment, inclusion and performance schools undertaken or considered by the Board will draw on more than published data relating to standards and attainment.

### **Substitution:**

Members will be expected to commit their time for the duration of their tenure. In extenuating circumstances, the Board can decide to a longer term substitute (for example in the case of long-term illness or absence).

### **Resignation:**

A Board Member may resign their position on the Board by giving 30 days' notice in writing to the Board Secretary. The Chair and Vice Chair may resign their position on the Board with a two-term notice.

In the event of a Board member's resignation, a new appointment can be made to fill the vacant position. The newly appointed Board member will be appointed to a full term of three years, and subsequently reappointed for a further three-year term.

After non-attendance for more than two consecutive Board meetings (reason dependent), the Chair will ask the Board Secretary to write to the member inviting them to consider whether they wish to continue with their Board membership. Persistent non-attendance at meetings will lead to the Chair proposing to the Board that a member is unable, unfit or failing to carry out their duties.

## **Protocol & Communications**

- a) Commit to attend meetings to represent their consortia phase/school type or service and bring that experience and knowledge to the group.
- b) If unable to attend a meeting a Headteacher or service/partner will send a deputy to attend in their absence and apologies should be notified to the Chair before agenda and papers are circulated, if possible.
- c) Read all documents prior to meetings and consult with appropriate personnel within the groups they represent i.e. consortia, school type or services.
- d) Ensure that minutes and any reports are effectively acted upon and disseminated to consortia/peers/colleagues they are representing.
- e) Contribute to the development of robust and effective monitoring and performance arrangements and be open to scrutiny and challenge.
- f) Ensure that agreed projects are completed.
- g) Be available for consultation between meetings to facilitate the business of the group.
- h) Arrange to share partnership events which may be of interest to educators.
- i) We share the equality objectives of BCC and are mindful of our responsibilities under equality legislation, including, recognising and encouraging diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity for members.
- j) Discussions may take place that are of a sensitive nature. All members should ensure that confidential and sensitive information is not shared unless appropriate and agreed.
- k) Pay due regard to Health & Safety, Data Protection and Safeguarding legislation.
- l) All communications are strength based and constructive and factual.

The Board will consider a range of quantitative and qualitative information to inform school improvement discussions. This includes desktop data, feedback from Fora Chairs across the educational sector, local community feedback surveys, factors identified through other LA departments and partners, current national changes, feedback from Birmingham Headteachers' Associations (post 16 and EY)

\*Part of the role of Fora Chairs is to provide assurance to respective Headteacher groups that school improvement processes are transparent and evidence based.

### **Meetings and Agenda**

Meetings are face to face and are held every two months.

### **Quorum for Meetings**

Quorum is a minimum of 50% representative membership from Headteachers/Setting Heads and three BCC directors.



## Agenda, Papers, Record of Attendance and Minutes

### Setting the Board Agenda

The Board will set an Annual Plan and Priorities for the year and share this with Headteachers, Setting Leaders and MAT CEOS a half term in advance to enable effective local response and communication. In the first meeting of the summer term the Education Board will set dates for the following academic year and these will be posted onto the Birmingham School Noticeboard.

The Chair will agree the agenda for each meeting of the Board, in consultation with the Director of Schools and Employability and the Board Secretary.

Board Members wishing to put forward agenda items should notify the Chair and Board Secretary at least 10 clear working days before the meeting. Their request must include appropriate supporting information. Requests made less than 7 clear working days before a meeting may be included on the agenda at the Chair's discretion.

Board agendas will be sent to Board Members at least 5 clear working days before the meeting with supporting papers, whenever possible.

It is within the Chair's discretion to allow urgent items not on the published agenda to be discussed at the relevant Board meeting. The reasons for allowing such action should be indicated by the Chair. It is also within their discretion to timetable an additional meeting for any urgent single item agenda or to schedule an ad hoc chair and vice chair meeting in this scenario.

Meetings are held in private to allow open discussion on confidential matters.

### Meeting Papers

The agenda and supporting papers for a meeting will be made available to Board Members via email at least five clear working days before a meeting, except in the event of an emergency.

## Clerking

### Independent Clerking Service

Minutes within 5 working days and to include:

- Provision of minutes and action tracker.
- Send email reminders on actions to members two weeks prior to the next forum meeting and request a written or verbal update report for the next meeting.
- Collate any written reports on updates prior to the meeting for the chair.

### Record of Attendance

- The names of the Chair and Board members present at the meeting will be recorded in the minutes.
- The names of others attending the Board meeting must also be recorded in the minutes.

### Minutes

The minutes of the proceedings of the Board meeting will be drawn up by the Board Secretary and submitted for agreement at the following meeting. Once confirmed as a correct record by the Board at the meeting, the minutes will be signed by the person who is in the chair at the meeting to which they have been submitted. The signed minutes will be taken as conclusive evidence of the facts stated therein. Any amendment to the minutes must be agreed and recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting at which they are submitted for agreement.

The minutes of Board meetings will be shared with Fora, Post 16 Executive Board and AP network as a standing agenda item for feedback/discussion and action.

Local Consortia and Networks will also receive the minutes via their Fora representative.

### Discussion and Conduct

The following protocols will apply:

- a) Papers should be circulated in advance, allowing members sufficient time to read them beforehand, they are expected to be with the clerk at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.
- b) Members are expected to be punctual for a prompt start to all meetings.
- c) Members will be expected to commit their time for the duration of the meeting.
- d) Mobile phones should be turned off or put on silent during the meeting.
- e) During the meeting, every person in the room has the responsibility to actively listen and participate. They are expected to contribute ideas and express opinions in a strength based relational practice model.
- f) Members conduct in all meetings will be non-judgmental, appropriately respectful and any challenges should be strength-based
- g) All members will address the meeting through an invitation by the Chair to speak.
- h) Members should remain focused on the item being considered and the evidence presented and avoid becoming anecdotal or discussing issues only relevant to their own school.
- i) Members are present to represent the views, opinions and concerns of the education phase or type of school they are representing.

- j) Wherever possible, members are expected to be concise and succinct.
- k) Acknowledge majority decisions made by Fora on behalf of the Headteachers they represent.

### **Visitors**

The Board and its members will agree to invite visitors to attend a Board for specific agenda items where they have the relevant skills, knowledge and experience. The Chair will be responsible for inviting and agreeing all visitors and potential speakers to the Board. The Board member proposing the visitor must prepare the speaker or visitor in advance of attendance on the Board's aims and objectives, so that their contribution in the meeting enables the Board to achieve these key aims. Discussions involving guest speakers and visitors will be strength-based and support relational partnership practice directed through the Chair.

The Chair will allocate specific time slots in consideration of the agenda requirements.

### **Voting**

The Board will seek to decide all questions by consensus. Where a consensus cannot be achieved, the Chair will call for a vote. A majority of the votes of all of the Board members present will decide the question.

In the case of a tied vote, the Chair of the meeting will exercise a second, casting vote.

Voting will normally be by a show of hands, with the result being formally recorded by the Board Secretary. A paper ballot may also be used if a majority of the Board members present request it.

If any Board member present requests it, the Board secretary will call the roll of Board members, with each Board member, on their name being called, indicating their vote in favour, against or abstaining. The Board secretary will record how each Board member present voted or abstained and this will be documented in the minutes of the meeting.

Board members who are absent from a meeting do not get a proxy vote. They may submit written views to the Chair and Board secretary prior to the meeting. At the Chair's discretion these written views may be entered in the debate.

### **Notice of Motions**

Any motion proposed must be seconded before it can be considered by the Board. A motion, once moved and seconded, may be withdrawn by the Board member proposing it, with the agreement of the seconder and the consent of the Chair.

If a Board member wishes to move a motion they can: (i) Send written notification to the Chair and Board Secretary at least 10 clear working days before the meeting. The motion will then be included in the agenda for the Board meeting, or (ii) Move a motion or amendment without notice during the meeting on any business on the agenda.

With regard to emergency motions, a Board member may give written notice to the Chair and Board Secretary that they wish to move an emergency motion up to one hour before the time fixed for the Board meeting. The written notice must set out the reasons why the Board Member regards the motion as a matter of urgency. The Chair's decision to accept the emergency motion will be final. The Chair will advise the Board at the beginning of the meeting that an additional item will be included in the agenda.

The mover of a motion has the right of reply at the close of any discussion on the motion they have moved. When a motion is under discussion, or immediately prior to discussion, it is open to any Board member present to move: (i) An amendment to the motion; (ii) The adjournment of the discussion on that agenda item, or the meeting; (iii) That the meeting proceed to the next business on the agenda; (iv) That an ad hoc committee be appointed to deal with a specific item of business arising from the motion; or (v) That the motion be put to a vote without further discussion.

### **Reporting Mechanisms – School Noticeboard and Prospective Lite Pendulum**

The Board will report out post meeting minutes to the following groups so as inform discussions and seek action, feedback and further reporting back regarding approaches to school improvement at a number of other groups and meetings:

- Schools' Forum.
- Headteacher Fora – Early Years, Primary, Special, Secondary, Alternative Provision and Post 16.
- SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Board.
- Improving Services for Children and Families Board.
- Birmingham Children and Young people's Partnership.
- Primary Consortia, Secondary Networks, Early Years Networks, the Alternative Provision network, MAT CEO network and Post 16 Operational Board. The framework for school improvement encompasses all schools engaged in the consortia or network groups and provides an opportunity for dialogue between headteachers and with the Local Authority.
- These groups are well established and have been a key vehicle for further developing collaborative relationships including school to school support and sharing of good practice. They also provide an opportunity for schools to raise concerns about the quality of support or services provided by the Local Authority. These groups are all chaired by headteachers and a representative, usually the chair of each group, will attend the Area Analysis Group for their area.

For relevant agenda items the Board may also agree to post minutes and request feedback and actions to other partnership groups partners as applicable

### **Local Leaders Discussion**

Pre and post Board meetings we ask that for all Fora, the post 16 Executive Board, Primary Consortia, Secondary and Early years networks have the Board as a standing agenda item at their meetings, so as to discuss minutes, raise their own agenda items or share reports and feedback. To enable the Fora chairs and the MAT CEOs to raise agenda items for the Board we have created a template for doing so – see Appendix 1.

We also ask that local leaders consider the following as other frequent agenda items:

- a) Data relating to local schools and vulnerable children
- b) The range and menu of support available for schools and other settings
- c) The success or challenges of any national or council policy
- d) Review of local projects relating to each local area such as DLP (issues or recommendations to be passed on to the Board at local groups request

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Conflicts of interests are defined as any personal or business interest within the past five years which may, or may be seen as, influencing a member's judgement in performing their role. Board members must immediately declare to the Chair any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest that might impact on their ability to represent all Headteachers or their sector, and the Chair must maintain an accurate and up-to-date register of all conflicts. Board members or visitors in attendance must remove themselves from discussions of, and must not provide advice on, practice where they have a conflict of interest, where there is a potential conflict of interest or where there is a perception of a conflict of interest.

### **Breach of these Terms of Reference**

If, following an investigation, it is deemed that these Terms of Reference have been breached by a member of the Board and the matter cannot be resolved in a constructive way, then the Board will consider their removal and seek a new member from the representative body.

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

The Board is aware of the implication of pending compliance for GDPR from May 2018. It recognises that the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) applies to the sharing of personal data. The Board will refer to the Data Protection Officer within the Local Authority and the Information Commissioner's 'Data Sharing Code of Practice' for advice on data sharing practice within meetings should further clarification be required

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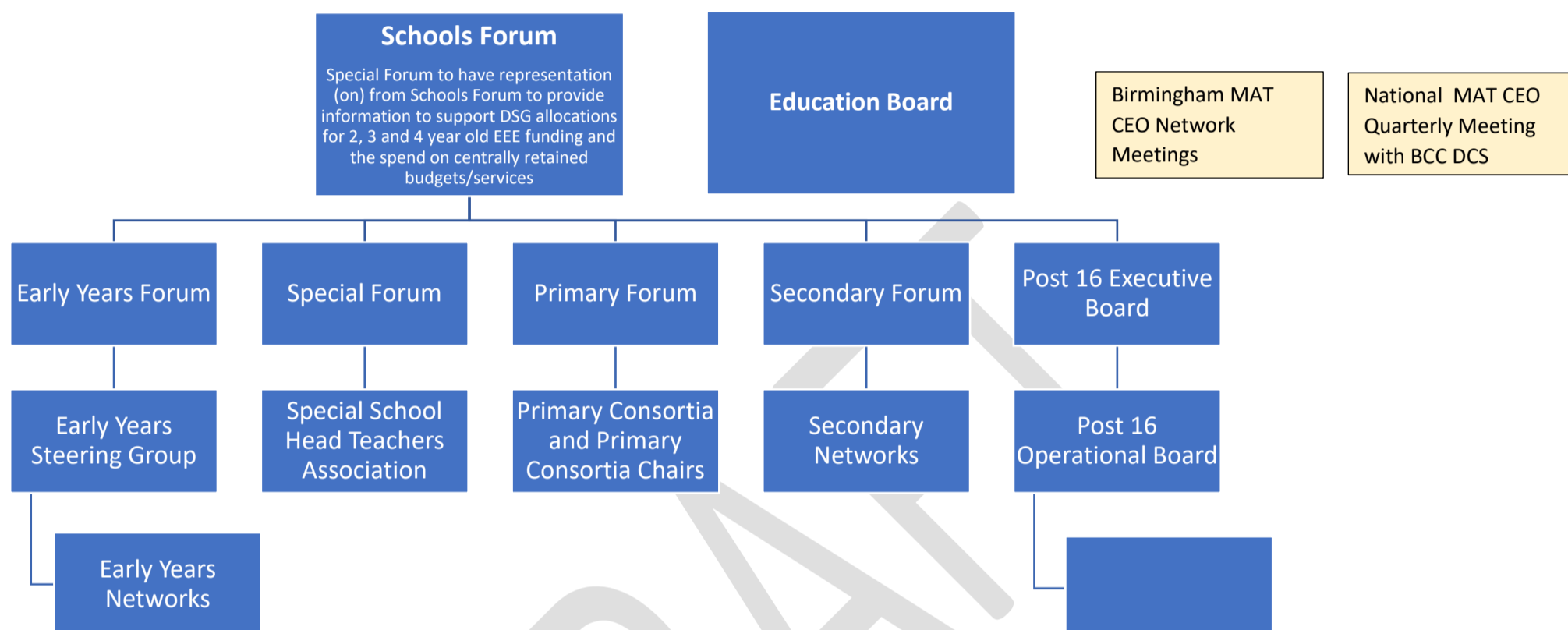
## Appendices:

### 1. Dates of the Education Board 2024-25

- 27 November 2024 (initial pilot meeting) 14:00-16:00
- 29 January 2025 14:00-16:00
- 5 March 2025 14:00-16:00
- 09 April 2025 14:00-16:00
- 21 May 2025 14:00-16:00
- 25 June 2025 14:00-16:00

Dates for 2025-26 will be agreed by the Board in Autumn term 2024

### 2. Governance Structures



### 3. Collective Strategic Actions

By using insight from outcomes and performance, and listening to the voices of children, young people and families partners have agreed a framework of collective strategic actions to achieve our ambition and to improve the following outcomes:

**Joining up our policy and practice** in local places so children, young people and their families connect with help and support they trust throughout their life-course

- Providing good quality education, help and support to families to improve outcomes for babies, children, and young people through early years, childhood, and adolescence, and into young adulthood.
- Designing integrated education systems, so professionals from different services can work together effectively, and families can connect with help and support they trust when and where they need it.
- Improving our digital offer, so that children, young people, and families can connect with digital information, advice, and support. Building safety with children, young people, and families at home, and in places outside of home.

**Building safety with children, young people, and families at home, in schools and educational settings and in places outside of home**

- Taking place-based and life-course approaches to building safety with children, young people, families in physical and virtual spaces.
- Helping children and young people to connect with support, safeguarding and protection from harm, wherever and whenever harm happens.
- Designing structures across our partnership so that children, young people, and families can build enduring relationships that help to keep them safe. Creating an inclusive city where all our children and young people can connect with meaningful opportunities and thrive.

**Creating an inclusive city where all our children and young people can connect with meaningful opportunities and thrive.**

- Connecting our babies, children, and young people with meaningful things to do, and safe, welcoming, and inclusive places to learn and grow.
- Responding effectively to babies, children, and young people with protective characteristics, SEND, and to those with additional needs.
- Creating inclusive cultures in all our schools, settings, and services, and supporting our workforce to use relationship-based approaches in their work with babies, children, young people, and their families.
- Supporting children and young people to develop a strong voice, get involved, influence decision-making, setting them up as confident adults.

A cross-cutting theme across all three of our collective actions is: **Acting together as partners to raise educational outcomes and break down barriers of poverty and/or inequality faced by Birmingham's children, young people, families, and communities.**