

Cllr. Shirley Marshall (now Brown)

■ Biography

Date of birth: April 18th, 1961

Place of birth: Bath, England

Shirley Marshall made history by becoming the first Black woman councillor in Bristol City Council in 2003. She changed her name to Shirley Brown when she got married in August 2007.

Shirley is the daughter of Jamaican parents, and she went to St Andrew's Primary School, Bath and Bath Diocesan Secondary Girls' School. She remembers from her school days that she particularly respected one of her teachers, Mrs.

Thomas, because she always supported her and told her that she had the ability to succeed. Shirley says that she experienced no racism at the school or anywhere else in the city of Bath, but this changed when she moved to Bristol in 1971 to be near her fiancé. She then became aware of people being bullied and physically attacked because of their skin colour.

After Shirley married her first husband, she went to Pitmans College to gain office qualifications. She then had three children and when they were old enough she went to college in Hertfordshire for management training. Although Shirley gained qualifications, she decided that working in an office environment was not right for her and therefore became a qualified childminder. Then she felt that she could help more people by working voluntarily in the Probation Service, helping people who had committed crimes to readjust to life outside prison. She also worked at a centre for homeless people in St. Paul's and offered them advice and support.

Having worked in the community for a while, Shirley felt that she really wanted to make a difference to the lives of the local people in St. Paul's. She therefore set out to become their local councillor. This meant she had to be elected, and she was successful in 2003. In this new role, she would help make serious decisions which affected the whole city on issues such as housing, education and transport. She also became a school governor for Cabot Primary School, which means she helps to run the school.



Shirley Marshall outside the Malcolm X Centre, St Paul's. She is a councillor for this area. Photo courtesy of Councillor Shirley Brown

Shirley also wanted to become involved with politics because she believes there is a need for young people to see more positive Black role models, so that they can see that they too can make a difference. She also acts as a mentor for young people and campaigns for more support for them. One of her proudest moments was seeing one of the young people she had mentored change from someone lacking direction in life to a responsible young man with a job. She explains that she wants to help young people to see the greatness within themselves and to see that they can achieve great things.

In 2007, Shirley launched Destiny U Can Ltd., her own company, which will hold seminars to inspire women, men and young people. She also hopes to launch a Back to Basics School to offer advice and training for young people, and has a number of projects in progress like a music school, and women's groups. One of her biggest role models is Olive Osborne, MBE, who has worked tirelessly for people in St. Paul's.

For the past seven years, Shirley has also been an ordained church minister. She studied at a Bible college and is presently a minister for Holiness Ministries, Pentecostal Church of God based in Wolverhampton.

In June 2006, Shirley started a petition following a number of stabbings in her constituency. She wanted to increase the length of time that individuals spend in prison for carrying a knife, from two to seven years. The campaign collected 2000 signatures on the petition and the local police contributed by donating more than a thousand t-shirts with the slogan 'Lives Not Knives'.



Councillor Shirley Brown at the Council House, 2007
Photo courtesy of Paul Bullivant and Tony Gill

Shirley's message is:

“ Success is in the hand of the believer. You have to believe in yourself, never be distracted, keep focused, and you can make it. Education is the key. ”

Cllr. Shirley Marshall

■ Teachers' Background Notes

Shirley Marshall made history by becoming the first Black woman councillor in Bristol City Council. She is well known in the city, and changed her name to Shirley Brown when she married in August 2007.

The daughter of Jamaican parents, Shirley went to St. Andrew's Primary School, Bath and Bath Diocesan Secondary Girls' School. She particularly respected one of her teachers, Mrs. Thomas, because she supported Shirley and told her that she had the ability to succeed. Shirley remembers that she experienced no racism at school or in Bath but this changed when she moved to Bristol in 1971 to be near her fiancé. She then became aware of people being bullied and physically attacked because of their skin colour.

After Shirley moved to Bristol and married her first husband, she went to Pitmans College to gain office qualifications. She then had three children and when they were old enough she went to college in Hertfordshire for management training. Although Shirley gained qualifications, she decided that working in an office environment was not right for her. She therefore became a qualified childminder but she felt that she could help more people by working in the voluntary sector. Shirley worked voluntarily in the Probation Service assisting offenders to re-adjust to life outside prison. In 2000, she worked at a centre for homeless people in St. Paul's offering advice and support, often talking to clients individually.

Working in the community for a period of time led to Shirley feeling that she wanted to make a difference to the lives of all people in St. Paul's and the Ashley area. She therefore set out to become a local councillor so that she could have an impact on policies and city wide decisions.

She also wanted to become a councillor because she believes young people want more positive Black role models so that they can see that they too can make a difference. She was elected to the council in 2003 and in 2006 successfully completed a leadership course. In 2006 she also became a qualified facilitator of childminding courses.

Shirley particularly wanted to help young people, by acting as a mentor and by campaigning for more resources for them. One of her proudest moments was seeing one of the young people she had mentored change from someone lacking direction in life to becoming a

responsible young man with a job. She wanted to help young people to see the greatness within themselves and to understand that they can achieve great things.

Alongside this role and her work as a councillor, Shirley also sits as a board member on the Children's Services' Scrutiny Commission and on the Licensing Committee of Bristol City Council. She is also a school governor for Cabot Primary School and makes a number of regular motivational presentations to young people.

In 2007, Shirley launched Destiny U Can Ltd, a motivational speaking company, which holds seminars to inspire women, men and young people. She also hopes to launch a Back to Basics School to give training and support for young people, for instance by offering training in how to cook.

She already has a number of projects in progress. She has just established an Arabic Women's group, a Domestic Violence Women's Group and a music school. She feels that working directly with communities helps her to be more effective as a councillor. One of her biggest role models is Olive Osborne, MBE, who has worked tirelessly for people in St. Paul's.

For the past seven years, Shirley has also been an ordained minister. She studied at a Bible college and is presently a minister for Holiness Ministries, Pentecostal Church of God based in Wolverhampton.

In June 2006, she started the 'Lives Not Knives' campaign following a number of stabbings in her constituency. She began a petition to campaign to increase the number of years individuals spend in prison for carrying a knife, from two to seven years. The campaign collected 2,000 signatures on a petition and the local police contributed by donating more than a thousand t-shirts with the slogan 'Lives Not Knives'.

In addition to her position as a councillor, Shirley is also working as the Family Support Coordinator for the Easton Families Project. Working in partnership with the Easton Christian Family Centre, the project offers help and support to families living in Easton in a way that involves and empowers children and families.

Shirley's message is:

"Success is in the hand of the believer. You have to believe in yourself, never be distracted, keep focused, and you can make it. Education is the key".

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■ Suggested Activities

These are suggested activities based on Shirley Marshall's biography. The activities in bold print have a detailed lesson plan on following pages.

Foundation Stage/ KS1 Activities	KS2 Activities	KS3 Activities
<p>Looking after me My mother, father, carer My childminder My nursery</p>	<p>Democracy Pupils to devise fair voting system for real event in the class/school – e.g. class monitors, school council reps.</p>	<p>Voting Discuss reasons to vote. Pupils to create poster or radio advert to persuade more people to vote in local and national elections. (Citizenship)</p>
<p>Mystery Who is this? Provide pupils with pictures and clues to build up profile of Shirley Marshall.</p>	<p>Our local area Link to unit of work on the local area. Invite Shirley Marshall into school to be interviewed by pupils about her work as a Bristol councillor.</p>	<p>Local politicians Identify the local politicians for wards where pupils live. Write letters to them regarding concerns pupils have about their local area. (Citizenship)</p>
<p>Believe in yourself 'I can' circle times and sentences. Take photos and create positive 'I can' or 'We can' display e.g. 'I can speak 2 languages' or 'We can speak (insert number) languages in our class.'</p>	<p>Role models Pupils to consider who they regard as a role model. Write descriptions and complete the sentence ...is my role model because...</p>	<p>School governors Pupils to investigate the role of the school governors.* Interview one or two governors or write letters asking questions about issues that pupils are involved in at school. (Citizenship)</p>

*See the resource list for details

■ Lesson Plan: Caring for others (PSHE)

Learning objectives

- To know that we need others to care for us.
- To know that we should care for others.
- To know that Black and minority ethnic people contribute to life in Bristol.

Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Parent/carer	Shirley Marshall's biography/picture	Whole class
Nursery staff	Pictures of people who care for us	Pairs
Nanny	Pictures of people caring	
Childminder		
Babysitter		
Teacher		

Suggested activities

- Read or share Shirley Marshall's biography. Talk about how Shirley cared for others.
 - Whole class talk using visuals: Who cares for us? E.g. parent/carer, grandparents, aunts, uncles, childminder, nanny, babysitter, teachers: Who do we care for? E.g. friends, pets.
 - Caring for new arrivals in the class. Discuss what new arrivals would need to know about the school/class. Pupils work in pairs to record in pictures some of these routines. Make a picture book of school/class routine to welcome new arrivals to the class. The book could be kept in the class library.
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Plenary

- Share the book with the whole class.
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Learning outcome/Success criterias

- Pupils are able to talk about people who care for them.
 - Pupils know that they too must care for others.
 - Pupils learn about Shirley Marshall's contribution to Bristol.
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Assessment opportunities

PSHE/Art

Parent/Carer involvement

Talk about how we care for each other in our families.

Note to teachers:

Be aware of family backgrounds of every pupil. Be sensitive to the needs of Looked After Children and Asylum Seeker and Refugee pupils and other vulnerable pupils.

*See the resource list for details

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■ Lesson Plan: Voting (PSHE/Citizenship)

Learning objectives

- To learn about voting and balloting.
- To learn about fairness and justice.
- To learn how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to politics in Bristol.

Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Voting Counting Ballot Results Selection Rules Fairness Nominations	Biography/picture of Shirley Marshall	Whole class Small groups

Suggested activities

- Read/share Shirley Marshall's biography. Focus on her being voted in as a Councillor. Discussion: The terms 'voting' and 'balloting;' What does a Councillor do? Who votes them into office?
 - Talk about other times when people vote e.g. for the government, school council. Discuss why people vote? Is voting a fair system?
 - Devise/plan a classroom vote e.g. class representative on the school council, classroom responsibilities etc. Decide on areas of focus: nominations, the voting, counting, results. Then carry out the vote.
 - Discuss difference between open vote in class and secret ballot voting in elections.
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Plenary

- Summary discussion on when is voting fair/unfair
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Learning outcome/Success criterias

- Pupils will know about voting/balloting.
 - Pupils are able to consider what is fair/unfair.
 - Pupils will know about Shirley Marshall's contributions to Bristol.
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Assessment opportunities

Correct use of terminologies.

Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

Find out about different times when we vote in the community.

Learning objectives

- To know about the role and responsibilities of school governors.
- To learn about accountability, democracy and volunteering.
- To know how Black and minority ethnic people contribute to politics in Bristol

Key words/phrases	Resources	Organisation/Grouping
Governors	Biography/picture of Shirley Marshall	Whole class
Responsibility	Information on role and responsibilities	Pairs
Accountability	of school governors*	
Democracy		
Volunteers		

Suggested activities

- Read/share Shirley Marshall's biography. Focus on her role as a school governor. Discuss and ensure understanding of key words.
 - Discuss the role and responsibilities of school governors using the information provided.
 - Work in pairs to prepare questions to interview a school governor. Discuss/agree as a whole class what questions to ask. Ensure questions on responsibility, accountability and democracy are included.
 - Invite a member of the school's governing body to the lesson. Interview the governor.
 - Discuss concept of pupil representation at governing body meetings with invited governor.
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Plenary

- Summary discussion: Do the governors represent all views in the school?
 - Discuss issues arising from the interview.
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Learning outcome/Success criterias

- Pupils know about the role and responsibilities of school governors.
 - Pupils understand the terms accountability, democracy and volunteering.
 - Pupils know how Shirley Marshall has contributed to life in Bristol.
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Homework task or Parent/Carer involvement

Find out what a parent governor does.

*See the resource list for details

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■ Resources

- Information on role and responsibilities of school governors included.
Taken from *Help Schools, Help Children* leaflet.
<http://www.governornet.co.uk>

Contact details

Name: Shirley Marshall*

Email: shirley.marshall@bristol.gov.uk

Willing to be contacted by teachers for further questions? Yes

Willing to come into school to talk to pupils? Yes

*In the summer of 2007 Shirley Marshall became Shirley Brown.

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■ Resources

How do governors help schools and children?

School governors are people who wish to make a positive contribution to children's education. Anyone with an interest in education can be a governor. Governors are volunteers who spend about 6 hours each month attending meetings and working to further the school's development.

The governing body consists of people from the school's community. Every school's governing body has parents, school staff, and a representative of the Local Authority (LA). Most schools also have community governors and certain schools have Foundation governors.

New school governors receive a nationally designed induction programme covering roles and responsibilities. LAs and others run training events to meet governors' needs.

What do governors do?

Together with the headteacher governors set the future direction for the school and decide how the school's budget should be spent. Governing bodies make decisions collectively on materials such as performance targets, school policies and the school's development plan.

Governors monitor the impact of policies and oversee the use of the school's budget. They report to parents on the school's achievements and respond to inspection recommendations. They hear appeals from pupils and staff and consider complaints.

Governors provide the headteacher with support and advice, drawing on their knowledge and experience. They ask searching questions and respect the headteacher's position as professional leader of the school.

Taken from *Help Schools, Help Children* leaflet.
<http://www.governornet.co.uk>