



GOVERNING BODY OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

This document gives details of the Governing Body's working structure and procedures for the next school year. It is reviewed annually and approved by the Full Governing Body.

2. Style and Standards (Governor Relationships)

The Governing Body acts at all times in accordance with the requirement laid down in Acts of Parliament, statutory regulations and the school's instruments and articles of governance.

The Governing Body acts at all time fairly, without prejudice and in accordance with the principles laid down by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Nolan Committee 1996), namely: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

An individual governor contributes to the overall governance process as a critical friend to the school.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will respect each other's roles and maintain a professional and open relationship, acknowledging the skills and contributions of all, supporting each other and recognising each other's responsibilities so as to form a good working partnership.

The Governing Body will use staff and governor time appropriately, sensitively and effectively.

The Governing Body will, in the way it conducts its business, always have regards to the need for the Headteacher, staff and governors to maintain a reasonable work/life balance.

All governors will contribute to discussion and support the corporate decision-making process, maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality and discretion.

Each governor must respect the confidentiality of those items of business that have been designated by the Governing Body as 'confidential' and must not disclose what individual governors have said or how they have voted.

Once decisions are made by the group, individual governors are bound by them and should be loyal to them. The Governing Body believes conflict is best resolved openly, through discussion, corporate decision-making and acceptance of the majority view. Where this cannot be achieved, suspension of a governor will be used as a last resort, in accordance with current regulations.

3. Membership, Training and Skills

The Governing Body will ensure it has sufficient governors to undertake its duties effectively.

All governors will be appointed for a 4-year term of office.

The Governing Body will ensure that it creates an environment which enables it to proactively recruit and retain effective governors.

The Governing Body will consider for associate membership those individuals who would not otherwise be qualified to be governors. Associate Members will not have voting rights and will be appointed for a term of one year at a time.

New governors will be welcomed and provided with appropriate induction and training.

All governors will undertake training relevant to their role.

All governors will share the workload and take on any additional responsibility at an appropriate time.

The skills base of the individual governors will be monitored and published.

4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors

The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected for one year at a time.

Candidates may self-nominate at any time in advance of a vote.

The Clerk will take the Chair for the election of the Chair.

Where an election of Chair or Vice-Chair is contested, voting will be by secret ballot.

Any changes to the Governing Body's arrangements for elections will be made in advance of any election.

5. Committees and Workgroups

The Governing Body is responsible for the appointment of committee members. This is normally done at the first meeting of the autumn term although additional members can be appointed at any time. The Clerk to the Governing Body will maintain and publish a list of members of each committee.

Subject to regulations, the Governing Body will make provision for staff dismissal and appeal, pupil discipline and admissions committees.

The Governing Body will appoint a Performance Management sub-committee to review the performance of the Headteacher under the Performance Management Policy and with the help of the Local Education Authority (LEA) advise.

The Governing Body will appoint a Pay Committee with guidance provided by the Chair of Governors and Headteacher.

Annual review of School Profile and Prospectus will be undertaken by a Workgroup as required.

The Governing Body will appoint a panel of governors to undertake the selection of a new Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and will seek ratification at a meeting of the Governing Body, convened for that purpose, at which at least a quorum shall be present before the appointment is confirmed.

6. Appointment of Clerk

The Clerk to the Governing Body will be provided by Governor Services. They will have a contract of employment that includes specific provision in relation to their work as a clerk. This will show hours, rate of pay, method of payment, overtime pay and period of notice and accountability.

The Governing Body will arrange for the Clerk to discuss their role and performance over the previous year with the Chair on an annual basis.

The Governing Body will support the Clerk in their continuing professional development, for example, via the Clerk's development programme, support meetings and whole Governing Body training.

7. Meetings

The programme of meeting agendas will have a focus on governors' responsibilities in monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes of the school's Improvement and Plan, within the range of Governing Body responsibilities.

7.1 Agenda setting

The Headteacher, Chair and Clerk of the Governing Body will liaise 10-14 days before each Full Governing Body meeting to determine the agenda for that meeting, having due regards to the programme of actions highlighted in the Governors' and Clerks' newsletter document issued by the LEA.

There will be no item for 'Any Other Business' or tabled papers, except when agreed by the Chair in exceptional circumstances.

7.2 Distribution of Papers

Governors will receive relevant information one-week in advance of meetings to enable sound discussion and decision to be made.

For full Governing Body meetings, the papers will normally be posted on the 'Hampshire Services for Schools' website. Governors should ensure they have a log on and password to access the site

7.3 Conduct and duration of Governing Body Meetings

Governors unable to attend Governing Body meetings should notify either the Clerk or the Chair of the Governing Body by email or telephone as soon as it becomes clear that they will be absent.

Recording the acceptance of apologies does not imply the consent of the Governing Body for a governor to be absent with regard to the Disqualification Regulations for non-attendance. Consent for absence may be granted by the Governing Body on request from governors who know they will be unable to attend meetings for an extended period. Where a governor's pattern of attendance is causing concern, they will be informed by the Clerk or the Chair.

Governors who do not advise absence prior to a meeting and fail to attend will be recorded in the minutes as 'absent'.

The Governing Body will aim to complete Full Governing Body and committee meetings within two hours and be prepared to not cover all agenda items if time runs out.

7.4 Parents and the Community

The Governing Body will seek opportunities throughout the year to engage with parents and the community in constructive discussion about the conduct of the school.

7.5 Quorum

The quorum for any Governing Body meeting will be 50% of those governors in post.

7.6 Frequency

The Governing Body will hold the minimum number of meetings necessary to ensure that the strategic business of the school is properly addressed.

The Full Governing Body will aim to meet once per calendar month apart from the month of August.

An annual calendar of dates for meetings including main topics, will be set and published.

7.7 Format of meetings

Governing Body meetings may be held virtually and/or in person. The Full Governing Body agree to allow video or audio conferencing to happen in accordance with Part 4 Section 14(8) of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013, which state that “the Governing Body may approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including, but not limited to, by telephone or video conference”. This also applies to committee meetings.

Wherever possible, governors should access the meeting via Microsoft Teams conferencing rather than telephone participation. Governors should follow guidance recommended by both Hampshire Governor Services and the National Governors’ Association, as follows:

- Governors will ensure that they participate in the virtual meeting whilst in a private and confidential space;
- Governors will mute their microphone when not speaking to minimise feedback noise;
- Where a governor wishes to ask a question or make comment, governors will indicate this by writing a question or comment in the chat forum present on the screen. This will alert the Chair, Headteacher and Clerk that they wish to speak at a convenient point before moving onto the next agenda item to help prevent confusion and overtalking;
- Governors attending a virtual meeting will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link after all reasonable efforts is lost, they will cease to contribute to the quorum but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate;
- Governors attending a virtual meeting will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they
- have been ‘present’ for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to;
- Virtual meetings should not be recorded by any governor or the Clerk without the approval of the Full Governing Body and for a specified purpose.

7.8 Delegation to the Chair to make emergency decisions on behalf of the Full Governing Body

In cases of genuine emergency and only as a last resort, governors agree to delegate the functions of the Full Governing Body to the Chair in order that a decision can be made in those circumstances on their behalf. This should be done sensibly, pragmatically and responsibly. The Chair will always make contact with governors to explain why it was necessary, and maintain a communication and audit trail explaining why the alternative approach was taken.

7.9 Headteacher Financial Delegation

Each September the Governing Body will approve the financial delegation to the Headteacher.

8. Strategic Planning and School Improvement

The Governing Body:

- Has involvement in the planning and agenda for school improvement and contributes to the strategic development of the school;
Seeks a shared understanding of the key strengths and weakness of the school, continuously self-evaluates its own performance and will use the LEA self-evaluation form biennially;
- Monitors and evaluates school performance, using a variety of internal and external information and direct observation, taking appropriate action on it;
- Requires written information from the Headteacher on pupil achievement, performance data and standards;
- Assesses progress against the School Improvement and Development Plan, effectiveness of the Performance Management Policy, school self-evaluation, training and fulfilment of statutory responsibilities as listed in Ofsted Form S3;
- Will be made aware and make use of external inspection reports from LEA advisers. Those provided by HIAS to the Chair of Governors (except those naming individual staff) will be circulated to all members of the Governing Body;
- Will seek to be 'good' (or better) in terms of Ofsted descriptors on school governance.

9. Policies

The school's policy set is as described in our Publication Scheme, plus our Best Value statement and the Register of Governors' Pecuniary Interests.

Each policy is owned by an individual governor, normally the Chair of the Governing Body or the Headteacher.

The policies are collated and stored in ring-files located in the administration office, in the Headteacher's office and in the staff room.

Every policy has a review date according to a schedule held by the Headteacher, and it is the responsibility of the owner of the policy to ensure this review takes place.

10. Commitment

Each Governor:

- Participates in the work of the Governing Body; for example, serving on committees and working groups, preparing for meetings, attending meetings, contributing to discussion and taking part in agreed actions;
- Becomes familiar with the school as a result of discussions with the Headteacher and staff, reading relevant papers, visiting the school and taking part in events;
- Strives to increase their ability to contribute to the work of the Governing Body by taking part in available training and other opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding;
- Helps new governors to understand their role and to make a full contribution;
- Promotes the best interest of the school and the education of its children at all times;

- Declares personal and pecuniary interests and avoids using their position as a governor for personal gain or the gain of outside parties, or to promote the interests of their own children to the detriment of others.

11. Governor Visits to School

All governors are encouraged to spend time in the school during normal school hours in order to build and refresh their general awareness of the school.

A protocol and process is in place to ensure effective use of focused governor monitoring and evaluation.

The outcome of Chair and Headteacher discussion are reported by the Governing Body, normally verbally at the Full Governing Body meeting or by email to every governor if the issues are time critical.

Approved by the Governing Body at its meeting on: September 2024

Signed (Chair of Governing Body):