



GOVERNING BOARD STANDING ORDERS
NIDDERDALE HIGH SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2018

(Reapproved October 2019, Reapproved October 2020)

Current legislation gives to governing bodies the flexibility to decide their own procedures unless there is a specific legislative requirement to operate in a particular way.

Whilst most governing bodies conduct business in a relatively informal way there is much benefit in having a framework to formalise the business of the governing body.

Standing orders provide such a framework and can avoid disputes arising by procedures and conventions having been agreed previously by the governing body. Standing orders cannot replace regulations or statutory guidance but are additional and supplementary to them.

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Standing orders for procedural workings of the governing body of Nidderdale High School (adopted October 2018)

1. Meetings of the governing body

The governing body shall meet a minimum of 4 times each school year.

2. Chair and vice-chair – term of Office

The chair and vice-chair shall have a term of office of 2 years. The term shall begin at the first governing body meeting of the autumn term at which the chair and vice-chair are normally elected and shall end at the first meeting following the 2nd anniversary of their election. In the event of the chair and/or vice-chair ceasing to occupy their post(s) part way through their respective term(s) of office then their successor(s) shall serve out the remainder of their predecessor's term.

When the office of chair or vice-chair becomes vacant the governing body must elect a new chair or vice-chair at the next meeting. If the chair is absent from a meeting, or if the chair is vacant, the vice-chair will act as chair for all purposes.

3. Election of chair and vice-chair

The clerk shall take the chair for the item dealing with the election of the chair and, in the event of a failure to elect a chair, for the item dealing with the election of the vice-chair. In the event of the governing body failing to elect a chair or a vice-chair the governing body shall elect a chair for the meeting. In the event of the governing body failing to elect a chair for the meeting then the meeting shall stand adjourned and the clerk, acting in consultation with the immediate past chair and the head teacher, shall convene a further meeting within 28 days of the adjournment.

4. Election of chair and vice-chair – procedure

All governors other than those who are under 18, pupils or paid to work at the school are eligible to stand as the chair or vice-chair of governors.

At this school the term of office will be two years and until the first meeting of the governing body in the autumn term following second anniversary of his/her election

Where a vacancy arises before the end of an incumbent's term the governing body will elect one of their number to fill that vacancy at their next meeting.

The appointment of a chair and vice-chair must be made at a quorate meeting of the full governing body. The clerk will chair that part of the agenda. Candidates must withdraw during discussion and vote.

Election procedures.

- a) The clerk to governors will invite nominations in advance of an election date. Governors may self-nominate.
- b) The agenda for the meeting will include "Appointment of a chair and vice-chair" as separate items.
- c) Where there are no advance nominations the clerk will invite nominations at the meeting.
- d) If more than one candidate, they will be invited to make a short statement before withdrawing.
- e) Voting will be by secret ballot.
- f) In the event of a tie a decision will be made by repeat ballot.

5. Annual calendar of meetings and business

At the first meeting of the autumn term the governing body shall approve a calendar of governing body and committee meetings and of planned business for the ensuing year and the clerk shall, within 14 days, of the meeting provide a copy of the calendar to all members of the governing body.

6. Notice of meetings and agenda

Every member of the governing body shall receive the following ***at least seven clear days in advance of a meeting:***

- ***written notice of the meeting;***
- ***a copy of the agenda for the meeting;***
- ***a copy of any reports or papers to be considered at the meeting.***

This standing order shall not apply where the chair of the governing body so determines on the ground that there are matters demanding urgent consideration. In that case the written notice of the meeting shall state that fact and the agenda, reports and other papers to be considered at the meeting are received within such shorter period, as the chair shall direct.

Where the governing board agree, notice can be sent by email but this should be discussed in the FGB and a protocol agreed. Governors should have secure school email addresses for governing body business and all aspects of confidentiality should be discussed.

7. Agenda Items

With the agreement of the chair of the governing body or of the relevant committee any member of the governing body shall be entitled to include, on the agenda for any governing body or committee meeting, an item(s) on any particular issue provided that written notice thereof is given, as appropriate, to the chair of the governing body, or of the relevant committee and to the clerk at least 14 days prior to the meeting taking place.

8. Quorum

- ***the quorum for a meeting of the governing body shall be not less than 50% of the number of governors in post at the time of the meeting*** (not including vacancies) or such other number as may be determined from time to time by regulations issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families;
- ***the quorum for a meeting of any committee of the governing body shall be at least three (3) governors who are members of that committee;***
- ***associate members shall not be included in the calculation for quorum purposes.***

9. Voting

Every proposition shall be determined by a simple majority, a show of hands or, at the discretion of the chair of the meeting by general consensus (except in the case of the change of status of the school which is currently an LA school).

Only those governors at the meeting and present in the room at the time of the proposition being put by the chair shall be entitled to vote; in the event of a tied vote the chair shall have a second or casting vote

Any proposition to change the status of the school shall be determined by a majority of 75% (only governors present in person may vote) by confidential paper ballot administered by the clerk.

10. Confidential Matters

Prior to the consideration of or discussion on any matter on any agenda for a meeting of the governing body or of any committee, consideration shall be given as to whether the matter includes confidential information and the governing body or committee shall determine whether the public or any other person, not being a member of the governing body, should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the matter. In the event of any matter being deemed to be confidential then the minutes of the discussion and decision ***shall be excluded*** from the minutes of the meeting to be made available for public inspection. This standing order is additional to the requirement for governors to withdraw from a meeting and take no part in the consideration or voting on any item in which they have a declarable interest as required by standing order 18.

11. Minutes of Meetings

The draft minutes of all governing body and committee meetings shall be approved by the chair of the meeting within 14 days of the meeting having taken place. Thereafter the approved draft governing body minutes shall be circulated to all members of the governing body within 21 days of the meeting having taken place.

All non-confidential minutes shall be made available for public inspection only after they have been submitted for approval to the next succeeding meeting of the governing body or committee, as appropriate.

12. Record of Attendance

Every governor attending a meeting of the governing body or of any of its committees of which s/he is a member shall sign her/his name in the attendance book or sheet provided for that purpose.

13. Apologies for non-attendance at meetings of the governing body

All apologies together with the reason(s) for non-attendance at a meeting of the governing body shall be submitted to the clerk or to the chair not later than the commencement of the meeting. ***The governing body shall then determine whether such absence(s) should be treated as a 'consented' or 'non-consented' absence(s) and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.*** The failure to submit an apology shall be deemed to be a 'non-consented' absence and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.

14. Disqualification for non-attendance

Any governor, with the exception of the head teacher, who fails to attend any meeting of the governing body for a consecutive period of 6 months without the approval of the governing body, and such approval being recorded in the minutes, shall be automatically disqualified from serving as a governor. The period of 6 months shall begin from the date of the first meeting missed by the governor. Foundation (but not ex-officio foundation) governors, community governors, partnership governors or sponsor governors so disqualified shall not be eligible for nomination, election or re-appointment as a governor of any category for a period of 12 months immediately following his/her disqualification. Parent or staff governors are eligible for nomination and election (or appointment in the case of parent governors) immediately following their disqualification.

15. Records of the governing body

The clerk to the governing body shall be responsible for maintaining and keeping up to date the records of the governing body which for the purpose of this standing order shall comprise the following:

- the minutes of the meetings of the governing body and its committees;
- the record of attendance;

- the register of business and other interests;
- the record of hospitality/gifts;
- copies of self-declaration forms to confirm that governors are not disqualified for any of the criteria listed;
- any such other records as may be determined from time to time by formal resolution of the governing body;
- Records of governor monitoring visits to school;
- The signed and approved code of conduct and standing orders.

The records of the governing body shall be kept in a secure place provided at the school and shall be available for inspection by the public, members of the governing body, parents of pupils at the school and the Local Authority. Confidential items and confidential minutes shall not be made available for public inspection.

16. Register of business interests

Every governor shall complete the register of business interests within one month of their election/appointment as a governor. Entries in the register shall be updated as and when necessary and in any event annually. In the event of any governor having no registerable business interests then a NIL return shall be recorded for that governor(s).

17. Conduct

The Governing body shall annually adopt an up-to-date code of conduct, ideally the National Governors Association version. Governors could be given a copy (paper or electronic) of the code of conduct.

All Members of the governing body shall abide by The Nolan Principles on Public Life as follows:

- **Selflessness** - holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves their family, or their friends;
- **Integrity** - holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties;
- **Objectivity** - in carrying out public business; including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits; holders of public office should make choices on merit;
- **Accountability** - holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office;
- **Openness** - holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands;
- **Honesty** - holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest;
- **Leadership** -holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

18. Eligibility

Every governor shall complete the Disqualification and Declaration form to indicate that they are eligible to be a governor at a maintained school. Every governor shall complete an application for an enhanced check to the Disclosure and Barring Service. Refusal to do so disqualifies the refusing governor. Governor DBS

records should be held within the school's Single Central Record along with all staff and volunteers.

19. Declarations of interest

If any member of the governing body has any interest, whether pecuniary or otherwise, in any item on the agenda for any meeting at which they are present, they shall declare such interest prior to the consideration of that item and shall immediately leave the room and take no part in the consideration of or voting on that item.

20. Urgent action by the chair/vice-chair of the governing body

Where it is not reasonably practical to hold a meeting of the governing body (or of the relevant committee that has the delegated authority to deal with any matter) or where the relevant 7 days' notice of the meeting cannot be given and there will be a delay that would be seriously harmful to the school or to any pupil or member of staff if the matter is not dealt with then the chair (or in his absence the vice-chair) shall have authority to take such action as is deemed appropriate in the circumstances to deal with the matter. Such action must be reported to the next available meeting of the governing body or committee.

21. Financial and other guidance

The governing body and any committee(s) established by it shall, at all times, abide by the North Yorkshire County Council Financial Standing Orders and any directions that may be issued by the Children and Young People's Service (LA) under The Code of Practice on Local Education Authority – School Relations, Ref: DfEE 0027/2001 and any subsequent amendment thereto. The governing body shall also have regard to and take account of any advice or guidance that may be issued by the LA from time to time.

22. Variation and revocation of standing orders

These standing orders will be reviewed annually at the first Business meeting of the academic year.

23. Interpretation of standing orders

The ruling of the Chair as to the construction or application of any of these standing orders, or as to any proceedings of the governing body, shall be final and shall not be challenged at any meeting of the governing body or committee.

24. Associate members

Any reference in these standing orders to a governor shall, where the context so admits, include associate members.

25. Delegation arrangements (Regulation 18, 19 and 20)

25.1 The governing body may delegate its responsibilities in line with the NGA Delegation Planner (Annex D) and occasionally to an ad hoc committee. Delegation arrangements will be reviewed annually. Delegation arrangements agreed by this governing body are available to view on the school website Governance tab.

25.2 No action may be taken by any individual governor unless authority to do so has been delegated formally or is taken under Chair's Action in an emergency. All decisions are made at a full governing body meeting unless an individual or a committee has delegated authority to deal with a specific issue. The governing body will receive and note a report on any decision which it has delegated to a committee or an individual.

25.3 The governing body will adopt procedures set out in relevant policies for matters regarding Staff Grievance, Conduct, Discipline, Capability, Suspension or Dismissal, Salary Appeals, Headteacher Appraisal, Exclusions, and Complaints.

26. Governors' Allowances (Part 6 regs 27 – 30)

The governing body has agreed to reimburse a governor for expenditure necessarily incurred to perform his / her duty, In accordance with Part 6 of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013. This Governing Body will pay expenses as follows:

- a. Travel expenses. Petrol/diesel costs may be claimed for meetings outside normal scheduled governing body meetings. Current rate per mile is as per NYCC teachers' allowance and 5p per passenger per mile.
- b. Printing. Per academic year – 1 x domestic ink cartridge and 1 x ream A4 paper.

All claims to be submitted within 30 days of expenditure to the Clerk for Headteacher's countersignature.

If you have any queries about information in this booklet please contact: Governor Support Services. Tel: 01609 798864 email: Governor.Support@northyorks.gov.uk

GOVERNOR VISITS TO THE SCHOOL PROTOCOL

1. Purpose/Benefits

- To raise governors' awareness of life and work in the school
- To develop positive relationships between governors and teachers
- To help governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school
- To help the school community to know the governors via their raised profile.

The visit is not about “inspection” which governors recognise is a professional activity the results of which are reported to them. The visits will provide governors with more understanding of the working life of the school and therefore can provide more detailed support and challenge where required.

2. Protocols

- Any visit to school by a governor should be planned between the Headteacher and / members of the Senior Leadership Team and the governor, at least 2 days in advance.
- Any visit will have a specific focus and will be agreed in advance with the Headteacher or the Senior Leadership Team
- Planning and other contextual detail will be provided by the Headteacher or the Senior Leadership Team in advance.
- The governor will report on the visit using the Governors Visits Report Form. This is to be submitted to the Headteacher within 2 working days via Clerk.
- The Headteacher will check the report for accuracy of content and any requirement for immediate actions to be taken.
- Any appropriate response will be made by the Headteacher to the Governor.
- The Visit Report will be included as a separate agenda point on the next meeting of the full governing body.

3. Commitment: 1 x half-day focused immersion visit by each member of the Governing Body per academic year.

4. Calendar of visits. A calendar of governors' visits to the school will be drawn up at the beginning of each year. The programme will ensure an even distribution of visits across subjects, year groups, classes, terms and teachers. However, the nature of a working school and the wide array of activities mean that governors will also be invited to attend other events in school on a more frequent basis. Governors are engaged (upon invitation) to visit the school for various reasons eg attend assemblies, prize giving etc.

5. Example events for other governor visits:

- Parent / Staff Forums
- Student voice activities
- Prize giving
- Assemblies / Remembrance Service / Carol Service
- Community events

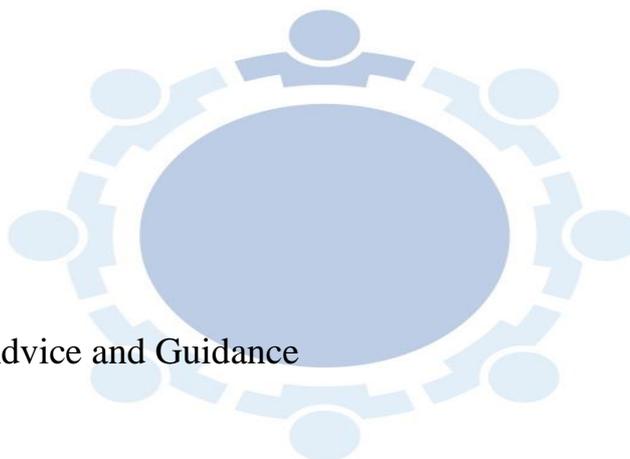
Report form for governor's school visit

NAME: DATE OF VISIT:
Purpose of visit <i>(Previously agreed by the governing body with the headteacher)</i>
Observations and comments by the governor <i>(e.g. what you saw; what you learned; what you would like clarified; how long the visit lasted)</i>
Any key issues arising for the governing body <i>(e.g. the way resources are allocated; the way the school communicates; progress in implementing a key policy)</i>
Action following governing body meeting <i>(Record any action agreed by the governing body with regard to this visit)</i>
Signed: Governor Date

Model Procedures

Code of Conduct

Legislation, policies and procedures



Author: Steve Edmonds, Director of Advice and Guidance

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www.nga.org.uk/knowledge-centre

National Governance Association

The National Governance Association (NGA) is the leading membership organisation for governors, trustees and clerks in state-funded schools, academies and free schools in England.

We are an independent charity that aims to improve the educational standards and wellbeing of young people by increasing the effectiveness of governing boards and promoting high standards. We do this by providing information; guidance and advice; undertaking research; delivering face-to-face training, e-learning and consultancy; and holding national conferences and regional events. We ensure the views of governors are represented at the national level and work closely with, and lobby, UK government and educational bodies.

Code of Conduct for School Governing Boards 2019 Version

This code sets out the expectations on and commitment required from school governors, trustees and academy committee members in order for the governing board to properly carry out its work within the school/s and the community. It can be amended to include specific reference to the ethos of the particular school. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' includes academies, and it applies to all levels of school governance.

This code can also be tailored to reflect your specific governing board and school structure, whether that is as a maintained school or academy, either as a single school or group of schools. Where multiple options are given, i.e. senior executive leader/headteacher and governor/trustee/academy committee member, please amend to leave the option relevant to your governing board.

Once approved by the governing board, the Code will apply to all governors/trustees/academy committee members.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the relevant law and for academies, their articles of association and agreed scheme of delegation. It should be adapted as appropriate depending on the governance setting and level of delegation. However, its guiding principles should be retained regardless of the governance setting and level of delegation afforded to it.

The governing board has the following 3 strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher (where delegated)
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the Headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

Ensure that other key players with a stake in the organisation get their voices heard by:

- Gathering the views of pupils, parents and staff and reporting on the results.
- Reaching out to the school's wider community and inviting them to play their part.
- Using the views of stakeholders to shape the school's culture and the underpinning strategy, policies and procedures.

Role & Responsibilities

- We understand the purpose of the board and its strategic role.
- We understand how the role of the board differs from and works with others including the headteacher and where appropriate, executive leaders, trust boards and academy committees.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open governance and will act appropriately.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools. □ We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school/group of schools. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders.
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the board and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation.
- We will respect the role of the executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements.
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing board as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
- When formally speaking or writing in our governing role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation. □ We will avoid, as far as possible, becoming involved in any communication which may lead to a conflict of interest with the role of the governing board.

Commitment

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor/trustee/academy committee member involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.

- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school/s, with all visits arranged in advance with the senior executive leader/headteacher and undertaken within the framework established by the governing board.
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor/trustee/academy committee member.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction, training and development, and will undertake relevant training.
- We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors/trustees/academy committee members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get information about schools).

Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors/trustees/academy committee members, the clerk to the governing board and school staff both in and outside of meetings.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We will confront malpractice by speaking up against and bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities' any decisions and actions that conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life (see annex) or which may place pupils at risk.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the executive leaders, staff and parents, the trust, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school.
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school/trust business arise outside a governing board meeting.

- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.

Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.
- We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise. We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

Ceasing to be a governor/trustee/academy committee member

- We understand that the requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a governor/trustee/academy committee member leaves office

Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governing board member, such as the vice chair will investigate.

Adopted by the governing board of Nidderdale High School 12/10/2020

The seven principles of public life

Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations)

Selflessness - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

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.

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

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.

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.

Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful

Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

The Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education

The Ethical Leadership Commission has developed the following Framework for Ethical Leadership to help school leaders take difficult decisions. As important as the language is, these aren't just fine words, they are meant to support a culture in which ethical decision making can flourish.

1. **Selflessness** School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.
2. **Integrity** School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.
3. **Objectivity** School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.
4. **Accountability** School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. **Openness** School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. **Honesty** School and college leaders should be truthful.
7. **Leadership** School and college leaders should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles, and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. Leaders should show leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:

Trust: *leaders are trustworthy and reliable*

We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.

Wisdom: *leaders use experience, knowledge and insight*

We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our schools and colleges with propriety and good sense.

Kindness: *leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper*

We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.

Justice: *leaders are fair and work for the good of all children*

- e. We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives. **Service:** *leaders are conscientious and dutiful*

We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.

- f. **Courage:** *leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people* We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.

- g. **Optimism:** *leaders are positive and encouraging*

Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.

Virtual meetings policy

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1. Aims

The aims of this virtual meetings policy are to:

- Enable the governing board to continue its work and maintain strategic oversight where face-to-face meetings aren't possible
- Provide a framework in which to run meetings virtually and include those attending virtually
- Provide flexibility so governors can attend meetings virtually where they would otherwise have had to miss them

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on:

- The Department for Education's (DfE's) [school governance update – March 2020](#)
- The DfE's guidance on [actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [The School Discipline \(Pupil Exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

This policy complies with the following legislation:

- [The School Governance \(Roles, Procedures and Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) (regulations 13 and 14)
- [The School Governance \(Roles, Procedures and Allowances\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) (regulation 3)

3. The board's ability to make alternative arrangements for meetings

Under [The School Governance \(Roles, Procedures and Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#), the governing board can approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing board, including, but not limited to, by telephone or video conference. This includes at full governing board meetings and committee meetings.

COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 lockdown, we can agree to hold meetings via telephone or video conferencing without having to meet first. The chair or clerk can contact governors directly to agree these alternative arrangements. The board has determined that the following arrangements will apply.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The chair

The chair will chair virtual meetings, and meetings in which some participants are attending virtually, in the same way as face-to-face meetings.

The chair will make sure all governors:

- Are set up on Microsoft Teams
- Have tested their connection and access to the platform
- Are aware of the expectations on attendees set out in section 4.3

4.2 The clerk

The clerk will give written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda at least 7 clear days in advance to the Governing Board.

Where there are matters demanding urgent consideration, written notice and a copy of the agenda can be given within a shorter period as the chair directs.

The clerk will minute virtual meetings, and meetings in which some participants are attending virtually, in the same way as face-to-face meetings.

The clerk will make sure the minutes reflect that the meeting is virtual.

The clerk will minute all decisions, and whether anything needs to be ratified at a later date, for example due to loss of connection.

4.3 All governors

To ensure confidentiality and the smooth running of the meeting, governors attending virtually will:

- Attend the whole meeting
- Attend with the webcam/video switched on where possible
- Focus on the business of the meeting in the same way as if they were attending in person
- Remain on mute unless they are speaking
- Say their name before they start speaking
- Prevent unauthorised individuals overhearing conversations (for example, by using headphones)
- Be mindful of their surroundings – they will consider the privacy of the room, including, but not limited to, who or what is visible or audible in the background
- Ask questions during the meeting by adding them to the video conferencing platform's messaging board, or waiting until the chair invites questions at the end of each agenda item

4.4 IT specialist

A member of IT staff will review the privacy terms and conditions of Microsoft Teams and make sure its security features are enabled.

5. Virtual meetings

Fully virtual meetings will only be held if face-to-face meetings are not possible.

5.1 Difficulty joining the meeting

If after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for a governor to participate by telephone or video conference, the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

The clerk will record in the minutes that the governor in question attempted to participate but was unable to do so.

5.2 Quorum

All governors attending virtually count towards the quorum.

If individual governors lose connection to the meeting, they will no longer count towards the quorum. The meeting can continue undisrupted if it is otherwise quorate.

If the meeting becomes inquorate then discussions may continue, but no votes can be held unless the meeting is quorate.

If all governors lose connection to the meeting then the clerk will postpone the meeting and reschedule. Where this is not possible, the clerk will send the matters for consideration via email, and will expect comments from governor within a specified timescale.

5.3 Voting

Governors may vote on any agenda item for which they've been fully present.

Secret ballots will be allowed where possible. Governors can share their vote privately with the chair/clerk via email or in a private phone call.

Where a virtual secret ballot cannot be arranged, then each governor can decide to vote publicly or abstain.

5.4 Conflicts of interest

Where a governor declares a conflict of interest, they will withdraw from the meeting by leaving the call.

Once the governing board is ready for the governor to re-join, the clerk will notify them by phone call, text or email.

6. COVID-19: holding exclusion panels virtually

The timeframes set out in [The School Discipline \(Pupil Exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) remain in force.

However, it is possible that these deadlines cannot be met due to the coronavirus pandemic. It is for the governing board to determine if these deadlines can be met by meeting virtually or if the meeting should be delayed.

6.1 Holding the meeting virtually

We will conduct an exclusion panel virtually via Microsoft Teams, if all parties have:

- Appropriate devices

- Access to a reliable, affordable internet service – if some parties access the internet through their mobile phone and do not have unlimited data, we will not require them to appear via video conference

6.2 Delaying the meeting

Where virtual meetings are not possible, we will delay the meeting and hold the exclusion panel as soon as is practicable.

7. Virtual attendance at face-to-face meetings

Governors may attend meetings virtually if they are unable to attend in person.

Any governor wishing to attend a meeting virtually should give 7 days notice to the chair/clerk where possible.

The governor will explain why they're unable to attend physically, and their virtual attendance at the meeting will be subject to the governing board's approval at the start of the meeting.

Where the board does not grant approval, the clerk/chair will notify the governor immediately and the clerk will minute this decision.

The meeting will be chaired by a governor present in person.

7.1 Difficulty joining the meeting

If after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for a governor to participate by telephone or video conference, the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

The clerk will record in the minutes that the governor in question attempted to participate but was unable to do so.

7.2 Quorum

Any governor attending virtually counts towards the quorum.

If the governor loses connection to the meeting, they will no longer count towards the quorum. The meeting can continue uninterrupted if it's otherwise quorate.

If the meeting becomes inquorate then discussions may continue, but no votes can be held unless the meeting is quorate.

7.3 Voting

Any governor attending virtually may vote on any agenda item for which they've been fully present.

Secret ballots will be allowed where possible. The governor can share their vote privately with the chair/clerk via email or in a private phone call.

Where a virtual secret ballot cannot be arranged, then the governor can decide to vote publicly or abstain.

7.4 Conflicts of interest

Where a governor attending virtually declares a conflict of interest, they will withdraw from the meeting by leaving the call.

Once the governing board is ready for the governor to re-join, the clerk will notify them by email, text or phone call.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually and be approved by the full governing board.

Approved by: Governing Board

Date: 12th October 2020

Next review due by: October 2021