

Westminster Special Schools Federation Governing Board **STANDING ORDERS**

Maintained school governing board procedures must comply with the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 . While these regulations provide a basic framework, the governing board also needs to agree more detailed ways of working to ensure our business is conducted efficiently and our rules are applied consistently and fairly.

These standing orders set out the procedures which have been agreed for our school. If any issue is not explicit the regulations will apply. The relevant regulation is indicated in brackets.

Date adopted: 9 June 2014

Date of next review: June 2018

Revised and agreed by Governing Board on 13 Nov 17

1 Roles of the Governing Board and Headteacher (Part 2, Regulation 6)

The governing board must operate in accordance with the following principles:

- 1.1 The functions of the governing board include the following core strategic functions —
 - (a) ensuring that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined;
 - (b) ensuring that the head teacher performs his or her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school; and
 - (c) ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school’s financial resources.
- 1.2 In exercising their functions the governing board will —
 - (a) act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and
 - (b) be open about the decisions they make and the actions they take and be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.
- 1.3 The head teacher’s responsibilities include—
 - (a) the internal organisation, management and control of the school; and
 - (b) the educational performance of the school.
 - (c) the head teacher is accountable to the governing board for the performance of all his or her responsibilities and must comply with any reasonable direction of the governing board

2. Governing Board Constitution and Membership

The constitution of the governing board, appointing bodies and terms of office for each category of governor are set out in the Instrument of Government (*Appendix A*)

- 2.1.1 All governors are asked to complete a skills audit which informs future appointments and helps identify our training and development needs. The governing board will review its skills and representation at the first business meeting of the school year and agree a strategy for recruiting to any vacancies at the summer term meeting.
- 2.2 This governing board is constituted under the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 which enable a governing board to address its skills and representation needs through the appointment of Co-opted and Local Authority governors:
 - Co-opted governors are persons “who, in the opinion of the governing board, have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school”.

- Local Authority governors are persons who are nominated by the local authority and appointed by the governing board “having, in the opinion of the governing board, met any eligibility criteria that they have set”.

2.2.1 Procedure for co-options:

- Candidates for co-option will be asked to provide a statement outlining the contribution they can make to the effective governance and success of the school
- a decision on co-option will be made at a quorate meeting of the full governing board
- the agenda for the meeting will include “Appointment of a co-opted governor” as a separate item. The names of candidates will appear on the agenda and copies of their statements circulated with papers in advance.

2.2.2 Procedure for Local Authority governor appointments:

- on notification of a vacancy the chair / clerk will liaise with the LA over desirable eligibility criteria for a new appointee
- the chair / other designated governor will meet the LA nominee and if content that the person meets the governing board’s criteria will propose that person to the next full governing board meeting with relevant supporting personal details.
- the agenda for the meeting will include “Appointment of an LA governor” as a separate item. The names of candidates will appear on the agenda and relevant supporting information will be circulated in advance.

3. Election of Chair / Vice-chair (Part 3, Regulation 7)

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.

3.1 Prior to the election of the chair and vice-chair, the governing board must determine the date on which their term of office will end. Within the Federation the term of office will be until the summer term meeting of the governing board following the election

3.2 In order to encourage distributed leadership and succession planning no-one will serve as chair or vice-chair for longer than six successive years other than in exceptional circumstances

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

3.4 Election procedures:

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

- a) The clerk to governors will invite nominations in advance of an election date
- b) The agenda for the meeting will include “Appointment of a chair and vice-chair” as separate items. The names of candidates will appear on the agenda
- c) Candidates will be invited to present to the board any additional information not included in the skills audit or under the section covering their contribution to the governing board.
- d) Candidates should leave for the discussion and vote.
- e) Voting will be: by show of hands
- f) In the event of a tie a decision will be made by drawing lots

4. Functions of the Clerk (Part 3 Reg 11)

The governing board must appoint and have regard to advice from the clerk on the exercise of its functions. The clerk must not be a governor or the headteacher. However if the designated

clerk fails to attend a meeting, an associate member or a governor who is not the headteacher may act as clerk for that meeting.

4.1 The clerk is responsible for:

- ensuring the efficient functioning of the governing board
- convening meetings of the governing board
- issuing notices of meetings, agendas and associated papers at least seven clear days in advance of meetings to all governors
- attending governing board meetings; producing draft minutes for agreement by the chair within 15 days of the meeting, ensuring that minutes are agreed and signed by the chair at the next meeting and that signed minutes are securely stored at the school
- maintaining a register of governors and associate members and reporting vacancies
- maintaining a record of governor attendance at meetings and reporting on non-attendance to the governing board
- providing advice to the governing board on the exercise of its functions
- Additional administrative support for governing board functions by agreement.

5. Meetings and Proceedings (Part 4 Regs 12 - 16)

5.1 The number of full governing board meetings per annum will be a minimum of 3.

5.2 The governing board will set a schedule of meetings, including those of committees, at the final meeting of the previous school year.

5.3 Meetings are convened by the clerk. Agendas and papers will be distributed at least seven clear days before the meeting. If an extraordinary meeting has been called the chair / vice-chair may allow shorter notice to be given.

5.4 The agenda will be prepared by the clerk in consultation with the chair and headteacher. Any governor may contact the clerk in writing to request that an item be placed on the agenda not less than 15 working days before the meeting. The clerk will include the request in the draft prepared for consultation with the chair and headteacher. The final decision on the agenda is for the chair.

5.5 Any other business: will appear as the final item on the agenda and should be notified to the clerk 48 hours in advance of the meeting. The governing board will decide whether any such item is to be discussed or dealt with in an alternative way. In general only "for information" items will be accepted; issues which require a report or decision will not be dealt with as aob.

5.6 The quorum for a meeting of the governing board is one half - rounded up - of the membership of the governing board excluding vacancies. The quorum for any committee meeting is at least three governors who are members of the committee.

5.7 The time of arrival and departure of any governor who is not present at the beginning or end of a meeting will be recorded in the minutes.

5.8 Absence / apologies: a governor or associate member ceases to hold office if s/he is absent without permission from all meetings over six months, calculated from the date of the first missed meeting.

Where a governor is absent and has sent apologies to the clerk or the chair the minutes will simply note receipt and a governor will cease to hold office after six months continuous absence. If an absent governor wishes to remain on the governing board s/he should inform

the clerk of this fact in writing and the governing board will decide whether or not to agree his / her continuation at their next meeting

- 5.9 All decisions are made at a full governing board meeting unless an individual or a committee has delegated authority to deal with a specific issue. The governing board will receive and note a report on any decision which it has delegated to a committee or an individual.
- 5.10 Participation in meetings by telephone, video conference or other remote means:
In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the chair, a governor may participate in meetings by telephone or video conference provided that:
- a. S/he has given notice of their intention to do so by detailing the telephone number or other contact details on which s/he can be reached or from which s/he will take part at least 48 hours before the meeting;
 - b. the governors present at the meeting have access to the appropriate equipment.
- If after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for the person to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting will still proceed provided it is still quorate.
- 5.11 The only people entitled to attend a meeting of the governing board are governors, the headteacher, the clerk and where appropriate, associate members. If the headteacher is absent the deputy head will attend in his / her place but will have no vote, unless s/he has been formally designated as acting headteacher.
- 5.12 The Heads of School will be invited to attend meetings of the governing board and the Deputies to attend relevant committee meetings as part of their professional development.
- 5.13 Minutes and papers : Within 15 days of the meeting the draft minutes will be sent by the clerk to the chair for checking. Once agreed the draft minutes will be sent to all members of governing board within 15 days of the meeting.
- 5.14 The approval of the minutes of the previous meeting should be on the agenda of every meeting. Once agreed the minutes will be signed and dated by the chair.
- 5.15 The original signed minutes will be kept in a book / binder on consecutively numbered pages, each page initialled by the person signing them as a true record. They will be stored in a secure place in the school.
- 5.16 A copy of the agenda, signed minutes, reports and papers for meetings (excluding confidential items) will be made available for inspection by any interested person.
- 5.19 All incoming correspondence to the governing board, other than any concerning a complaint, or a named pupil, parent or staff member or any other confidential matter is for the attention of the full governing board. It may however be more expediently dealt with by the chair, member of staff or by an appropriate committee with delegated authority.
- 5.19.1 The clerk will log all correspondence to the governing board and in consultation with the chair may allocate it to an appropriate individual or committee. It will either be dealt with at the next GB meeting or that meeting will receive a report from whoever has dealt with the issue.
- 5.19.2 Correspondence which concerns a complaint, or a named pupil, parent or staff member or any other confidential matter will be forwarded to the chair / appropriate governor / committee / member of staff dealing with the issue to be dealt with through the relevant school policy and procedure with appropriate confidentiality protocols

6. Conduct and suspension / removal of governors (Reg 17 / Constitution regulations)

- 6.1 The governing board has adopted a Code of Conduct for Governors. The code will be reviewed each year at the summer term meeting. Every governor will be asked to sign a copy as part of their Induction Programme.
- 6.2 Significant breaches of the Code could be grounds for suspension or removal if they are inconsistent with the ethos of the school or likely to bring the school or the governing board or office of governor into disrepute. In these circumstances governing board will follow the procedures for suspension of a governor as set out in the regulations.
- 6.3 The governing board may remove co-opted governors as well as appointed or elected parent or staff governors.

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

The governing board may delegate many of its functions to a committee, an individual governor or to the headteacher. It must review delegation arrangements annually. Delegation arrangements agreed by this governing board are available to view at the school.

- 7.1 No action may be taken by an individual governor unless authority to do so has been delegated formally or is taken under Chair's Action in an emergency.
- 7.2 The governing board will receive and note a report on any decision which it has delegated to a committee or to an individual.
- 7.3 Staff appointments: the delegation arrangements for staff appointments are:
 - i) Support staff: Executive head / Heads of School / school staff
 - ii) Teaching staff: Executive head / Heads of School / school staff/with governor involvement where appropriate, following consultation with the chair.
 - iii) Senior leadership team: Executive head / Heads of School / with governor involvement
 - iv) Heads of School: Panel of Governors with Executive headteacher
 - v) Headteacher: Panel of governors
- 7.4 Staff grievance, conduct and discipline, capability, suspension or dismissal; salary appeals; headteacher appraisal; exclusions; complaints: the governing board will adopt procedures set out in relevant policies.

8. Committees (Part 5 Regulations 21 - 26)

- 8.1 The governing board determines the constitution, membership and terms of reference of any committee and must review these annually. This governing board has the following committees:
 - Resources
 - Standards and Achievement
 - Pupils, Parents and Partnership
- 8.2 A Leadership Team meets at least once each term to support the Chair in making the Governing Board more effective, preparing the Governors' Development Plan and ensuring that the committees work together in a co-ordinated way.
- 8.3 Associate Members: An AM is a person who is appointed by the governing board as a member of any committee but who is not a governor. The governing board decides whether or not the AM has voting rights on the committee. An AM may attend full governing board meetings

without a vote and may be excluded from any part of a meeting which concerns an individual member of staff or pupil.

- 8.3.1 The governing board has agreed the following arrangements for Associate Members:
- candidates will be asked to provide a statement outlining the contribution they can make to a particular committee
 - a decision on appointment and voting rights on the committee will be made at a quorate meeting of the full governing board
 - the agenda for the meeting will include “Appointment of an associate member to the committee. The names of candidates will appear on the agenda and copies of their statements will be circulated with papers in advance
 - Associate Members will not serve on committees which deal with individual named pupils, members of staff, governors or families and will withdraw from any part of a meeting where named individuals are discussed.

9. Collaboration with other schools (Schedule 2 reg 4)

The School Governance Collaboration Regulations 2003 and School Staffing Regulations 2012 allow board /governing bodies to collaborate with other schools and to make arrangements for their functions to be jointly discharged. This school has agreed reciprocal arrangements with the governing board of Hallfield School, whose governors may be called on if there are insufficient governors available from this school.

10. Governors’ Allowances (Part 6 regs 27 – 30)

The governing board has agreed to reimburse a governor or associate members for expenditure necessarily incurred to perform his / her duty, subject to the restrictions set out in the Governor Allowances policy (available to view at the school) and to be made on provision of a receipt for the relevant amount. All claims are subject to audit scrutiny.

11. Pecuniary Interests / restrictions on taking part in meetings (Schedule 1; Reg16)

A governor must declare an interest – direct or indirect, financial or personal and withdraw from a meeting and not vote on the issue. Candidates for appointment or election must also withdraw and not vote. Staff members must withdraw from discussion of any pay or appraisal issue concerning another member of staff. If there is a dispute about whether a person should withdraw the governing board will decide on the matter

11.1 In addition members of staff will be asked to withdraw if the appointment of their successor is being discussed

11.2 Declaration of Interests will be a standard item on governing board and committee agendas

11.3 A register of Business Interests has been established and is available to view at College Park School

Appendices

- Governing Board: List of members and terms of office
- Instrument of Government
- Committee Terms of reference
- Individuals' responsibilities and attachments
- Policy on paying governors' expenses
- Code of Conduct agreed by governors
- Delegation arrangements