



**Federation of  
Westminster  
Special Schools**  
Training & Outreach

# **GOVERNING BOARD STANDING ORDERS**

Reviewed and revised by the Governing Board May 2020

## 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 Federation 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: Spring 2021**

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

The Governing Board must operate in accordance with the following principles:

#### **Overriding Principles**

The Governing Board is the Federation's accountable body. It is responsible for the conduct of the schools, services and for promoting high standards. The Governing Board aims to ensure that children are attending a successful federation school which provides them with a good education and supports their well-being.

**The Governing Board has the following core strategic functions:**

##### **Establishing the strategic direction**

- Setting the values, vision and priorities for the Federation
- Agreeing the policy framework for achieving the vision and priorities
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting Statutory duties

##### **Ensuring Accountability by:**

- Appointing the Executive Head teacher/ Acting Headteachers
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Performance managing the Executive Head teacher/Acting Headteachers
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to the Federation self-evaluation

##### **Ensuring Financial Probity**

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring sound financial planning
- Ensuring the risks to the Federation are managed

- 1.2** In exercising their functions the Governing Board will —
- Act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the Federation and
  - 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 Executive Headteacher's/Acting Headteachers' responsibilities include—
- The internal organisation, management and control of the school;
  - The educational performance of the school, staff and pupils
  - The two Acting Headteachers are jointly responsible for specified cross federation functions and staff however, they are not jointly covering the EHT post and complete range of responsibilities.
  - Supporting the AHT Pastoral who is the delegated lead for safeguarding across the Federation.
  - The Executive Headteacher/ Acting Headteacher 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 (Annex A).

- 2.1** All governors are asked to complete an annual skills audit which informs future appointments and helps identify training and development needs. The Governors' Leadership Group will review governing board skills and representation in a timely manner and decide on a strategy for recruiting to any vacancies. Recruitment procedures are set out in Annex B.
- 2.2** All governors are required to complete a Declaration of Eligibility, based on the reasons for disqualification as set out in Schedule 4 of The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.3** The 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 Federation
  - 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”.
  - In addition associate members can be recruited to fill any skill gaps.
- 2.4** 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 Federation.
  - 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.

- 2.5** Procedure for Local Authority governor appointments:
- On notification of a vacancy the Chair/ Co- Chair will liaise with the LA over desirable eligibility criteria for a new appointee.
  - The Chair / Co Chair and another 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 /Co- Chairs/ 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. This would usually be a Co-Chair or Vice Chair of Governors. If the vacancy arises within one of the committees, the committee vice-chair would usually fill the vacancy until annual elections take place. Alternatively other appropriate arrangements would be put in place at the discretion of the Governing Board.
- 3.4** Election procedures:
- The appointment of a Chair/Co-Chairs 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 agenda for the meeting will include “Appointment of a Chair/Co Chairs and Vice-chair” as separate items. The names of candidates will appear on the agenda.
  - Candidates will be invited if required 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.
  - Candidates should leave for the discussion and vote, if required by the governing board.
  - Voting will be by show of hands.
  - 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 Executive Headteacher/ Acting Headteacher. However, if the designated clerk fails to attend a meeting, an associate member or a governor who is not the Executive Headteacher/ Acting Headteacher may act as clerk for that meeting.

## Summary of functions:

- Provide advice to the Governing Board on governance and constitutional matters
- Provide effective administration support to the Governing Board and its committees.
- Ensure that the Governing Board is properly constituted.
- Manage information effectively in accordance with legal requirements.

### 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. This can also be delegated to a governor
- 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 4.

5.2 The Governing Board will set a schedule of meetings, including those of committees usually at the final meeting of the previous school year, but on occasions may decide to do this at the Spring term full Governing Board meeting.

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/Co Chair / Vice-chair may allow shorter notice to be given.

5.4 The agenda will be prepared by the Chair who will then consult Executive Headteacher/Acting Headteachers.. Any governor may contact the Chair in writing to request that an item be placed on the agenda not less than 15 working days before the meeting. The final decision on the agenda is for the Chair.

5.5 Any other business (AOB) will appear as the final item on the agenda and should be notified to the Chair 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 unless considered to be an urgent item.

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 or two governors and an associate member who are members of the committee. A co-chair of governors attending the meeting can also contribute to the quorum.

**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.

**5.9** Where a governor is absent and has sent 'apologies' the Governing Board has to consider whether it will accept the apology or note the apology. An apology is likely to be accepted if there are exceptional reasons such as:

- Personal sickness
- Unable to get time off work
- Emergency/ unavoidable circumstances

However, if a pattern of non-attendance at meetings emerges for whatever reason then the Chair of Governor/ a Co-Chair will investigate. There may be justifiable reasons for non-attendance at meetings but if a governor is unable to attend a range of meetings during a term and the non-attendance issues cannot be resolved, then the matter may arise as to whether the governor concerned is available to undertake the duties of a governor. Continued non-attendance would be to the detriment of the Governing Board and the Federation.

**5.10** 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 Chair of Governors/Co-Chairs are delegated to make decisions on behalf of the Governing Board if the matter is urgent, or in the interests of the Federation. The Governing Board will receive and note a report on any decision which it has delegated to a committee or an individual.

**5.11 Participation in meetings**

- At the discretion of the chair, a governor may on occasion participate in meetings remotely. The Governor must contact the Chair and make the request as soon as possible but not less than 3 days before the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place including governors at the meeting having access to the necessary equipment.
- If for technical reasons remote access cannot be achieved then the meeting will proceed providing it is quorate

**5.12** The only people entitled to attend a meeting of the Governing Board are governors, the Executive Headteacher/ Acting Headteachers, Training and Outreach Manager, associate members, other senior Federation staff by invitation and the clerk. However, other people may be invited to attend the FGB meeting if agreed by the Governing Board or Chair/Co Chair of Governors. If the Executive Headteacher is absent the Heads of School can attend in his / her place but will have no vote, unless s/he has been formally designated as Executive Headteacher. However Heads of School can be designated as Acting Headteachers and in which case they may be appointed as associate members on all committees where they will have a vote and contribute to the quorum. However, with regard to the Leadership Group and Full Governing Board they can attend to report and give advice and information but do not have a vote. In addition the Training and Outreach Manager can be appointed as an associate member under the same arrangements as the Acting Headteachers.

- 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 the 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 schools.
- 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.
- 5.17 All incoming correspondence to the Governing Board will be dealt with by one of the Co-Chairs

**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. In exceptional cases it may be reviewed at the Spring term full Governing Board meeting.
- 6.2 Significant breaches of the Code could be grounds for suspension or removal if they are inconsistent with the ethos of the Federation or likely to bring the Federation or the Governing Board or office of governor into disrepute. In these circumstances the Governing Board will follow the procedures for suspension of a governor as set out in the regulations. The process for removing governors is set out in Annex E.
- 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 Executive Headteacher/Acting Headteachers/ nominated lead. The only nominated lead is the AHT Pastoral who is the Lead in relation to Safeguarding. The Governing Board must review delegation arrangements annually. Delegation arrangements agreed by this Governing Board are available to view at the schools.

- 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 or where a delay would be to the detriment of the Federation.
- 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. All staff with governor delegation responsibilities will report to committees and the Full Governing Board as required

### **7.3 Staff appointments: the delegation arrangements for staff appointments are:**

- Support staff: EHT/Acting HTs / Heads of School / school staff/ governors optional.
- Teaching staff: EHT/Acting HTs/ Heads of School / school staff/with governor involvement where appropriate, following consultation with the Chair /Co- Chair of Governors
- Senior leadership team: EHT / Acting HTs/ Heads of School / with governor involvement.
- Heads of School: Panel of Governors with EHT
- EHT/Headteachers/Acting Headteachers Panel of Governors led by Co-Chair of Governors

**7.4** Staff grievance, conduct and discipline, capability, suspension or dismissal; salary appeals, Executive head teacher 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 terms of reference and membership of committees annually. The Governing Board has established the following committees:

- Resources
- Standards and Achievement
- Pupils, Parents and Partnership
- The Governors Leadership Group

**8.2** Associate Members: An associate member 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 associate member 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** 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 Federation 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 Federation.

**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 schools) 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/associate member 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 if required by the Governing Board 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 on the Federation website.