



Federation of  
Westminster Special Schools  
& Bi-Borough Inclusion Service

# Federation Governing Board

# **STANDING ORDERS**

**Reviewed and amended by the Federation Governing Board May 2023**  
**Reviewed and amended by the Federation Governing Board May 2024**  
**Next review due: May 2025**

# 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.

## **Standing Orders should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for governors and associate members**

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### **1. Roles of the Federation Governing Board and Executive Headteacher**

(Part 2, Regulation 6)

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

### **2. Federation 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.

### **3. The Governing Board has the following core strategic functions:**

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Federation.
- Hold the Federation Leadership Team to account for the educational, and financial performance of Federation schools and services.
- Oversee the financial performance of the Federation and make sure money is well spent.

### **4. Executive Headteacher/Headteachers Responsibilities include**

- The internal organisation, management and control of the Federation schools and Services.
- Ensuring that systems and processes are in place to measure impact on pupils, staff and service users.
- The financial performance and effective use of resources across the Federation.
- Safeguarding of pupils and staff across the Federation.
- The Bi-Borough Inclusion Service -EHT
- The Executive Headteacher/Headteachers are 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.
- Supporting the Governing Board with federation development and expansion.

## 5. The Governing Board Constitution and Membership

- 5.1 The Constitution of the Governing Board, appointing bodies and terms of office for each category of governor are set out in the Federation Instrument of Government.
- 5.2 All governors are asked to complete an annual skills audit which informs future appointments and helps identify training and development needs. The Governing Board will review governing board skills in a timely manner and decide on a strategy for recruiting to any vacancies.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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 governors, local authority governors and associate members:
- 5.4.1 Co-opted, previously known as community 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’.
- 5.4.2 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”.
- 5.4.3 In addition, associate members can be recruited to fill any skill gaps.

## 6. Procedure for co-options:

- 6.1 When there is a vacancy the Chair/ Co- Chair of Governor/Vice Chair will liaise with the governor recruitment agencies and undertake other forms of recruitment taking account of desirable eligibility criteria for a new appointee.
- 6.2 The Chair / Co Chairs/Vice Chair and if necessary, another nominated governor will meet the candidate 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 including a skills audit.
- 6.3 A decision on co-option will be made at a quorate meeting of the full Governing Board.
- 6.4 The agenda for the meeting will include “Appointment of a co-opted governor and copies of their skills audit and supporting information circulated with papers in advance to governors meeting.

## 7. Procedure for Local Authority governor appointments:

- 7.1 When there is a vacancy the Chair/ Co- Chair of Governors/Vice Chair will liaise with the LA over desirable eligibility criteria for a new appointee.
- 7.2 The Chair / Co Chairs/Vice Chair and if necessary, another nominated 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 and a skills audit.
- 7.3 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 and skills audit will be circulated in advance.

## 8. Election of Chair /Co- Chairs/ Vice-chair (Part 3, Regulation 7)

- 8.1 All governor other than those who are under 18, or members of staff are eligible to stand as the Chair/Co-Chair or Vice-chair of governors.
- 8.2 Prior to the election of the Chair/Co-Chairs and Vice-chair, the Governing Board must determine the date on which their term of office as Chair/Co/Vice Chair will end. Within the Federation the term of office is one year and elections take place at the June governing board meeting.
- 8.3 In order to encourage distributed leadership and succession planning no-one should serve as Chair/Co-Chair or Vice-chair for longer than six successive years other than in exceptional circumstances. However, if a chair becomes part of a co-chair arrangement this is considered to be a different position to being a sole chair and the period to serve becomes no longer than six successive years other than in exceptional circumstances.
- 8.4 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 Co-Chair or 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.
- 8.5 The appointment of a Chair/Co-Chairs /Vice-chair of Governors/Committee Chairs/ Co Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees must be made at a quorate meeting of the full Governing Board. The clerk will chair the part of the agenda until Chair/Co-Chair of Governors appointed. Then the Chair will be taken by the elected chair or one of the elected co-chairs.
- 8.6 The agenda for the meeting will include "Appointment of a Chair/Co Chairs /Vice-chair/ Committee chairs/co-chairs as separate items. The names of candidates will appear on the agenda. Prior to the meeting all governors are invited to express an interest in any of these positions. 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. The Governing Board must be satisfied that the candidate(s) has the required skills, knowledge and experience to undertake the role. 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.

## 9. Functions of the clerk (Part 3 Reg 11)

- 9.1 The Governing Board must appoint an independent clerk /governance professional who should not be a member of Federation staff and have regard to advice from the clerk on the exercise of its functions.
- 9.2 The clerk must not be a governor or the Executive Headteacher. However, if the designated clerk fails to attend a meeting, an associate member or a governor who is not the Executive Headteacher may act as clerk for that meeting.

### 9.3 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.

#### 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 schools in liaison with the Federation Business Manager and stored on Governorhub
- Maintaining a register of governors and associate members and reporting vacancies if required.
- 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.

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

- 10.1 The number of full Governing Board meetings per annum will be a minimum of 4.
- 10.2 Each committee will meet at least once a term.
- 10.3 The Governing Board will set a schedule of meetings, including those of committees usually at Spring term full Governing Board meeting. Meetings are convened by the clerk/chair. Agendas and papers will be distributed as far as possible at least seven clear days before the meeting. If an extraordinary meeting has been called the Chair of the meeting may allow shorter notice to be given. However, if federation reports are delayed this will delay dispatch. **Therefore, federation reports must be provided in a timely manner.**

- 10.4 The FGB agenda will be prepared by the Clerk in liaison with the Chair who will then consult the FLT. Governors 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.**
- 10.5 If a difficulty arises at a committee/panel then the Chair/Co-Chair of Governors/Vice Chair must be consulted to ensure consistency of approach.
- 10.6 Agendas for committee/panel meetings will be prepared by the Clerk in collaboration with the Committee Chair/ chair/co-chair/vice chair of Governors to ensure consistency of approach. This also provides support to committee chairs/co-chairs.
- 10.7 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.
- 10.8 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 is at least three governors who are members of the committee including the EHT. A co-chair/chair of governors/vice chair who is attending the meeting but not a committee member can contribute to the quorum. The quorum for any panel is two governors. A co-chair/chair / vice chair governors who is attending the meeting but not a panel member can contribute to the quorum. 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.
- 10.9 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’ the Governing Board has to consider whether it will accept/not accept 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
  - ❖ Prior special agreement by Governing Board in exceptional circumstances
- 10.10 However, if a governor/associate member does not send apologies in time for the meeting then it counts as not accepted and the clock starts ticking or continues to tick. if a pattern of non-attendance at meetings arises for whatever reason, then the Chair of Governors/ a Co-Chair/vice 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 question 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.

## 11. Participation in meetings

- 11.1 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;
  - In exceptional circumstances, and on occasion, the chair may decide to hold a meeting remotely.
- 11.2 The only people entitled to attend a meeting of the Governing Board and Committees are governors, the Executive Headteacher, Headteachers, Head of the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service, Federation Business Manager, associate members, the clerk, other senior Federation staff by invitation. However, other people may be invited to attend the FGB meeting or committees if agreed by the Governing Board or Chair/Co-Chair of Governors. If the Executive Headteacher is absent the Federation Headteachers and the Head of the Bi-Borough Inclusion Service can attend and represent the EHT but will have no vote, unless s/he has been formally designated as Executive Headteacher.
- 11.2 Minutes and papers: Within 15 days of the meeting the draft minutes will be sent by the Clerk to the chair for checking. Once checked the draft minutes will be put on Governorhub and circulated to all attendees who have actions to do before the next meeting.
- 11.3 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.
- 11.4 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. The minutes will also be on Governorhub.
- 11.5 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.
- 11.6 All incoming correspondence to the Governing Board will be dealt with by one of the Co-Chairs/Chair of Governors in conjunction with the clerk.

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

- 12.1 The Governing Board has adopted a Code of Conduct for Governors and associate members. The Code will be reviewed each year at the Spring/Summer term meeting. Every governor and associate member will be asked to sign a copy on joining then annually. Governorhub may also be used to confirm that the document has been read and accepted.
- 12.2 Significant breaches as outlined in the Code could be grounds for suspension or removal. In these circumstances the Governing Board will follow the agreed Federation procedures for suspension of a governor as set out in the regulations.

- 12.3 The Governing Board may remove co-opted governors as well as elected parent or staff governors. Regarding the LA Governor the same approach will be adopted.

### 13. Delegation arrangements (Regulation 18, 19 and 20)

- 13.1 All decisions are made at a full Governing Board meeting unless an individual/panel/committee has delegated authority to deal with a specific issue. The Chair /Co- Chairs of Governors are delegated to make decisions or act on behalf of the Governing Board if the matter is urgent, or in the interests of the Federation. **However, chairs action does not apply in relation to any planned business not presented to the Governing Board in a timely manner.** The Governing Board will receive a report and note any decisions made at their next meeting. Chairs/Co-chairs of committees or panels do not have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of committees or panels.

### 14 Staff appointments

- 14.1 The delegation arrangements for staff appointments are:
- **Support staff:** HTs
  - **Teaching staff:** HTs
  - **FBM:** EHT with at least one governor, usually the Chair/ Co-Chair(s) on selection panels
  - **HR Manager:** EHT, FBM, with at least one governor, usually the Chair/ Co-Chair(s) on selection panel
  - **Business Support staff non- management:** EHT, FBM HTs
  - **All business support appointments should involve the HTs**
  - **Senior leadership team:** EHT / HTs/ with governor involvement.
  - **Headteachers** EHT plus two governors with at least one Co-Chair/COG
  - **EHT:** Panel of three governors led by Co-Chair of Governors/COG.
  - **BIS Support staff:** Head of Service/, FBM and EHT where appropriate
  - **BIS Teaching staff** EHT/Head of Service/ Team leaders
  - **BIS Team leaders** EHT/Head of Service/Co-Chair of Governors or nominated governor
  - **Head of Bi-Borough Inclusion Service:** EHT plus two governors including Chair/Co - Chair of Governors
  - 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. EHT to liaise with Chair/Co-Chairs of Governors

### 15. Committees and Panels (Part 5 Regulations 21 - 26)

- 15.1 The Governing Body determines the constitution, membership and terms of reference of any committee/panel and must review terms of reference and membership of committees/panels annually. The Governing Board has established the following committees and Panels:
- Governors Leadership Group chaired by Chair/Co-Chair/Vice Chair of Governors
  - Finance and Premise
  - Pupils and Learning



- Contracts Panel chaired by Chair/Co-Chair of Governors
- Pay Panel – An appointed adviser will support this panel. The Panel should only meet with adviser present.
- Executive Headteacher Performance Management (EHTPM) An appointed external adviser will support this panel and the adviser should be present at mid-term and end of year reviews.
- Headteacher Performance Management Panels HTPM with appointed adviser.
- Head of BIS Performance Management EHT without a panel

## 16. Associate Members

- 16.1 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 associate member has voting rights on the committee. It has been agreed in principle that associate members will have committee voting rights. An associate member may attend full Governing Board meetings without a vote and may be excluded from any part of a meeting which is considered to be confidential.
- 16.2 When there is a vacancy the Chair/ Co- Chair of Governors will liaise with the governor /associate member recruitment agencies and undertake other forms of recruitment taking account of desirable eligibility criteria for a new appointee.
- 16.3 The Chair / Co Chairs and, if necessary, another nominated governor will meet the candidate 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 including a skills audit. The same process as co-opted governors.

## 17. Collaboration with other schools (Schedule 2 reg 4)

- 17.1 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 to sit on staffing panels. Other collaborations will be established and developed with a range of Federation activities.

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

- 18.1 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, on the website or clerk/Co-Chair/Chair of Governors and to be made on provision of a receipt for the relevant amount.
- 18.2 All claims are subject to audit scrutiny.

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

- 19.1 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.
- 19.2 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 Chair of the meeting will decide on the matter.
- 19.3 In addition, members of staff will be asked to withdraw if the appointment of their successor is being discussed.
- 19.4 Declaration of Interests will be a standard item on **G**overning Board and committee19agendas.
- 19.5 A Register of Business Interests has been established and is available to view on the Federation website and Governorhub. In addition, Governors are asked to update their business interests on an annual basis via GovernorHub usually in the autumn term.