

**Standing Orders**  
**The Governing Board**  
**The Duke of Bedford School, Thorney**

**Composition of the Governing Board**

- 1 Local Authority Governor
- 1 Staff Governor
- The Headteacher
- 4 Parent Governors
- 5 Co-opted Governors

Total: 12 governors

**Governor Elections**

- Parents – arrangements for elections are decided by the Local Authority and delegated to the Headteacher. Election is by postal secret ballot (includes posting by hand).
- Staff – elected by the school staff, paid to work at the school, who can vote for any candidate. Any election which is contested must be held by ballot.
- Authority – nominated by the Local Authority.
- Co-opted – chosen by the Governing Board. They can be people who live or work locally or other people who are committed to ‘the good government and success of the school’.  
Terms of office generally 4 years and can be removed from office by the Governing Board.

**DBS Enhanced Disclosure**

All Governors are required to hold an enhanced DBS disclosure certificate

- Further details of reasons for disqualification from becoming a governor may be found in ‘A Guide to the Law for School Governors’ (School Governance (Constitution)(England) Regulations 2003)

**Appointment of Elected Officers of the Governing Board**

- At the first meeting of the Autumn Term or the last meeting of the preceding year, the Chair and Vice Chair will be elected.  
Nominations will be made by email to the clerk at least 24 hours before the meeting and a vote will take place if necessary. The term of office is one year.
- The Chair will conduct all the meetings of the whole Governing Board except where, in his/her absence, the Vice Chair takes the chair.
- If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent, those governors present may choose someone from among their number for that meeting only. This should not be an employee or pupil at the school.
- If the Chair resigns, leaves the Governing Board or is removed from office, the Governing Board must hold an election at the next meeting. A Vice-Chair will exercise the powers of the Chair in the interim

**Role of the Chair**

- To make sure that the governing board’s affairs are conducted in accordance with the law.
- To ensure that meetings are run effectively.
- To help the governing board work as a team and ensure that all governors have an equal opportunity to participate.
- To work effectively with the Headteacher, establishing a constructive relationship.
- To carry out any duties delegated by the governing board and to undertake specific roles under, for example, performance management.
- To ensure that the governing board acts as a sounding board to the Headteacher and provides strategic direction.

## **Appointment and duties of the Clerk to the Governing Board**

- The governing board must appoint a clerk to the governing board. Governors, associated members and the Headteacher of the school cannot be appointed as clerk to the governing board.
- The clerk is accountable to the governing board.
- The clerk maintains a register of attendance and reports this to the governing board.
- The clerk maintains a register of members of the governing board and reports vacancies to the governing board.
- The clerk takes minutes of all full meetings of the governing board. If s/he is unable to attend, a substitute should be appointed.
- The clerk advises the governing board on constitutional and procedural matters.
- The clerk has a responsibility to meet the administrative needs of the governing Board.
- The clerk should work closely with the Chair and they should confer with each other regularly.

## **Meetings of the Governing Board**

- The Governing Board must hold at least 3 meetings in every school year, and more when necessary.
- Dates for meetings will be set at the end of the year prior to the start of the new academic year.
- Meetings will be held at a time acceptable to the full governing board.
- Meetings will be planned on an annual basis.
- Regular attendance at meetings of the full Governing Board and Committees is essential. If a Governor is unable to attend, they should inform the clerk with a reason for absence for acceptance by the Governing Board.
- If a Governor does not attend 2 consecutive FGB meetings without good reason, the Clerk / Chair will contact them to seek clarification of their commitment to the Governing Board.

## **Quorum**

- The quorum for any governing board meeting and vote must be one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of the governing board, excluding any vacancies.
- The quorum for committees (where appropriate) will be three.

## **Drawing up the agenda for Full Governing Board meetings**

- The clerk will discuss the agenda for FGB meetings with the Chair and the Headteacher.
- If anyone wishes to include any agenda items, to put these forward to the Chair, Headteacher and the Clerk.
- The clerk will discuss with the Chair which items, if any, come under the 'confidential' section of the agenda.
- The agenda and any documents relevant to the meeting should be sent to governors at least seven clear days before the day of the meeting.

## **Withdrawal**

- The governing board will establish a register of pecuniary interests for all governors and staff, which should be open to inspection. Governors and staff will declare any links they have with local firms from which the school may wish to buy goods and services. The register should be maintained by the clerk to the governing board and reported to the first meeting of the governing board in each academic year.
- Governors should declare a particular interest, financial or other, in any of the items on the agenda at a meeting. If this is the case, they should not take part in discussion, must not vote and should withdraw from the meeting.
- Pecuniary interest is defined as a financial interest either personally or through a company or relative or partner.
- Apart from the Headteacher, no one employed at the school can take part in a meeting at which pay or appraisal of any member of staff is being discussed.
- Headteachers must withdraw if their own case is under discussion.
- A governor should withdraw and not vote if their appointment or removal as a governor is being discussed.
- The chair should withdraw if their removal is being discussed.

## **Confidentiality**

- Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing board especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.
- Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Any dispute, discussion or disagreement should remain confidential to those present at the meeting.
- Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing board.
- Any governor who persistently breaches confidentiality that has been agreed by the governing board will first be approached privately to explain why this behaviour is damaging to the governing board. If this has no effect, further measures may have to be taken.

## **Voting Procedures**

- Every question to be decided at a full governing board meeting must be decided by a majority of votes of those governors present and eligible to vote.
- Where there are an equal number of votes, the Chair has the casting vote.
- All decisions must be made by a full meeting of the governing board unless an individual or committee has been delegated to deal with a specific issue.
- Decisions will be made after full discussion.
- Voting will be by a show of hands unless any one member or more require a secret ballot.
- Any decision made by the Governing Board is binding upon all its members.
- Decisions of the governing board may only be amended or rescinded at a subsequent meeting of the governing board when the proposal to amend or rescind will be a separate agenda item.

## **The Publication of Minutes**

- The clerk must ensure that minutes are drawn up, approved by the governing board and are signed by the Chair at the next meeting.
- The governing board must make available for inspection to any interested person a copy of the agenda, signed minutes and reports or papers considered at the meeting as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- Information relating to a named person or any other matter that the governing board considers confidential should not be made available for inspection.
- Action will be taken on the basis of decisions and need not await the approval of minutes at the next meeting.
- Minutes of meetings will be available upon request.

## **Committees**

- A committee/working party will only be established if the governing board deems it necessary.

## **Associate Members**

- The Governing Board can appoint associate members to attend full governor meetings.
- Associate members may vote on certain issues if agreed by the governing board, but not those relating to admissions; pupil discipline; election or appointment of governors; the budget and financial commitments of the governing board.

## **Delegation of functions**

The governing board cannot delegate functions relating to:

- The constitution of the Governing Board.
- The appointment or removal of the chair and vice-chair.
- The appointment of the clerk.
- The suspension of governors.
- The delegation of functions.
- The establishment of committees.

### **Delegations to individuals**

- No action may be taken by an individual governor unless authority to do so has been delegated formally by resolution of the full Governing Board.
- The Governing Board can delegate any of its statutory functions to a committee, a governor or to the Headteacher, subject to prescribed restrictions.
- The Governing Board will review the delegation of functions annually.
- The Governing Board is accountable for any decisions taken, including those relating to functions delegated to a committee or individual.

### **Access to meetings**

- Governors, associate members, the Headteacher and the clerk have the right to attend all Governing Board meetings.
- The Governing Board can allow any other person to attend their meeting.
- The Governing Board can appoint associate members to attend full governing board meetings.
- Associate members may be excluded from any part of a meeting when the item of business concerns an individual pupil/member of staff.

### **Restrictions on access to meetings**

- Where there is a conflict between the interests of any person and the interests of the Governing Board, that person should withdraw from the meeting and should not vote.
- In a situation where there is any reasonable doubt that a person may not act impartially, s/he should withdraw from the meeting and should not vote.

### **Papers and Reports**

- All papers relating to policy creation or amendment, significant new project, major capital expenditure proposal or other serious matter affecting the management, cooperation or performance of the school should be presented in writing to the relevant meeting at least 7 days in advance.
- Unless the item has been classified as urgent by the chair, this should ensure that all governors have sufficient information and the opportunity to give full consideration to the matter concerned before the meeting.

### **Governor Visits**

- Governors do not have an automatic right to visit the school but need to make visits in order to develop their understanding of the school and enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities for the conduct of the school.
- Visits should be arranged in advance with the Headteacher/subject leader.
- The Governing Board should plan visits to cover a wide range of school work and each should have a clear purpose.
- Governors should adhere to the 'Policy for Governor Visits'.

### **Complaints**

- All maintained schools are required by law to have a complaints procedure in place. This policy should be adhered to at all times.
- In responding to criticism or complaints relating to the school, governors should refer to the school's 'Complaints Procedure' for the correct procedure to be followed and advise the complainant accordingly.

- All complaints should be immediately directed to the Headteacher for discussion and clarification. The Headteacher will seek advice from the Chair of Governors and/or the appropriate committee Chair when appropriate.

### **Communications with governors**

- E-mailed notice of meetings and the agenda will be sent to members at their school e-mail addresses so that they may be received seven clear days before the meeting whilst those for an extraordinary meeting called by the chair or by requisition written notice may be sent within a shorter time.
- Governors will be contacted before a full meeting of the governing board to request any items to be included on the agenda for this meeting.
- Papers which inform Agenda items will be sent to governors with the agenda.

### **Induction of new governors**

- All new governors will visit the school at the earliest opportunity to meet the Chair and the Headteacher, and will be given the checklist for the Induction of new governors.
- Each new governor will be allocated an experienced governor to act as mentor (as appropriate)
- New governors will be provided with all relevant information to enable them to gain an understanding of the school and their role as a governor.
- All new governors should attend the a Governor Induction course with PCC as soon as possible after their appointment, the clerk will provide details of this.
- Each new governor will be given an induction pack that includes:
  - Checklist for new governors
  - Relevant policies
  - Details for accessing Governorhub to access papers from previous meetings.

### **Procedures for changing the standing orders**

- Amendments to these standing orders may be made by the Governing Board at the first full meeting of the academic year.
- At any other meeting of the full governing board

**AGREED BY FGB 22/09/22**