

WHITCHURCH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

STANDING ORDERS

1. Chair and Vice-Chair

- 1.1 The Governing Body (GB) will decide the term of office of the Chair and Vice-Chair (minimum 1 year, maximum 4 years) and record its decision.
- 1.2 When the Chair and Vice-Chair are due for election, the GB will elect both positions from among its number (though excluding any employee of the school).
- 1.3 The GB will decide in advance of the election the process of election for either or both positions that will be in accordance with school governance regulations.
- 1.4 If nobody has indicated willingness to stand for the office of Chair, the item will be deferred until a future meeting when a Chair can be elected and the rest of the meeting will be taken by an Acting Chair.
- 1.5 The Clerk will take the chair when the Chair is being elected. Otherwise the Chair will conduct all meetings of the GB except that, in their absence, the Vice-Chair will take the chair.
- 1.6 If the election of the Chair or Vice-Chair is contested it will be decided by secret ballot. Governors standing for election will withdraw and not vote.
- 1.7 If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, the GB will elect a Chair for that meeting.
- 1.8 If the Chair resigns, or has to relinquish the office for any reason, the Vice-Chair will act as Chair until a successor is appointed at the next meeting of the GB. The election of Chair will be a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.
- 1.9 If the Vice-Chair resigns, or has to relinquish the office for any reason, a successor will be appointed at the next meeting of the GB.
- 1.10 The Chair can be removed from office by the Governors following procedures set out in Regulation 7 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

2. Calendar of Meetings

- 2.1 The GB will meet at least three times per Academic Year (AY).
- 2.2 Committees will meet at a frequency determined by the GB.
- 2.3 The GB will set the dates for its meetings, including those of any committee, termly or annually as determined from time to time by the GB

3. Timing and Duration of Meetings

- 3.1 Meetings will start promptly and will normally be held on weekday evenings.
- 3.2 A meeting may be discontinued at any time if the GB so resolves. If so, or if the meeting has to be abandoned because it is no longer quorate, a further meeting shall be called as soon as practicable to complete the unfinished business. Typically meetings are held on weekday evenings and last 2 hrs for full GB and 1 hr for committees, but may vary according to need. However, the GB will always keep these under review and amend as required.

4. Quorum

- 4.1 The quorum for all business of the GB is one half of the total number of Governors in place; not including any Governor vacancies.
- 4.2 The quorum for committees will be determined by the GB and specified in their terms of reference.
- 4.3 Meetings which become inquorate will be discontinued.

5. Withdrawal from meetings

- 5.1 Governors will be required to withdraw from a meeting under circumstances set out in Regulation 14 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 5.2 If there is a dispute about a person attending a GB meeting being required to withdraw, the matter of withdrawal shall be determined by the GB.

6. Convening meetings

- 6.1 All meetings will be convened by the Clerk, in accordance with the arrangements made by the GB, but subject to (a) any direction from the Chair where a matter is urgent, or (b) any requisition signed by three Governors.

7. Notice of Meetings

- 7.1 Written notice of meetings, together with the agenda, will be sent so as to arrive seven clear days before the meeting – except where the Chair calls an urgent meeting at short notice – to (a) Governors at their normal addresses, and (b) the HT if not a Governor
- 7.2 Non-receipt of notice of a meeting will not invalidate the meeting.

8. Agenda

- 8.1 The agenda will be prepared by the Clerk in accordance with any determination of the GB and in consultation with the Chair and the HT.
- 8.2 Any Governor may place an item on the agenda by sending a written request to the Clerk to be received at least two weeks before the meeting
- 8.3 Papers that inform agenda items will be sent to Governors with the agenda if practicable.

9. Late Items/Any Other Business

- 9.1 The agenda will allow matters to be brought forward by the Chair. There will be no allowance for AOB

10. Suspension of Governors

- 10.1 The GB will suspend a governor for a period of up to six months under circumstances set out in Regulation 15 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

11. Governors' Expenses

- 11.1 The GB will prepare a policy on the payment of expenses of governors in accordance with regulations.

12. Attendance

- 12.1 The Clerk will keep a record of those governors and all other persons present at meetings of the GB or any of its committees.

- 12.2 Where a governor sends an apology for absence with reason, the GB will decide whether to 'consent' to the absence and the Clerk will record the decision in the minutes.
- 12.3 The point of arrival and/or departure of any governor not in attendance throughout any meeting will be recorded in the minutes
- 12.4 Any Governor who misses consecutive meetings for a period of six months, without due notice, apology and explanation will be deemed to have resigned.

13. Minutes of Meetings

- 13.1 The signed minutes of meetings will be kept in a binder in school
- 13.2 Any dissenting views will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, if that is the wish of one or more governors present
- 13.3 Action will be taken on the basis of decisions and need not await the approval of the minutes at the next meeting.
- 13.4 Within 7 school days of the meeting, the draft minutes will be sent by the Clerk to the chair for checking.
- 13.5 Copies of the draft minutes, once 'approved' by the chair, will be sent to the GB within 14 school days of the meeting
- 13.6 The approval of the minutes of the previous meeting will be on the agenda of every meeting of the GB and once approved as a true record (subject to any agreed amendments) the minutes will be signed and dated by the chair.
- 13.7 Those matters which the GB determines shall remain confidential will be minuted separately under Part 2 and such minutes will not be made publicly available.
- 13.8 The approved minutes will be made available at the school, at all reasonable times, for inspection.
- 13.9 Minutes made available for inspection will include papers forming part of the meeting, except in confidential and sensitive matters.

14. Confidentiality of Proceedings

- 14.1 Details of any discussion, dispute or disagreement should remain confidential to those present at the meeting

15. Correspondence

- 15.1 All incoming correspondence to the GB (other than any concerning issues relating to a complaint) is for the attention of the whole GB, even if addressed to the chair and/or the Clerk. Significant items will be circulated to all governors as and when received/presented to each meeting of the GB

for action or information as appropriate. The chair will report upon any correspondence on which they have already taken urgent action.

- 15.2 The GB will determine by resolution who may write letters on behalf of the GB, either generally or on specific issues

16. Information and Advice

- 16.1 The HT headteacher has a statutory duty to keep the GB fully informed, and will present a written report to a termly meeting of the GB.
- 16.2 A representative of the LA will be invited to attend meetings in order to inform and advise the governing body when considered appropriate
- 16.3 At the autumn term meeting each year the governors will receive details of the results of tests in the preceding summer term and compare these with the targets set and the previous year's results.
- 16.4 Where (exceptionally) important information required by the GB is given orally, it will be recorded in the minutes in appropriate detail
- 16.5 Where information required by the GB is not readily available, reasonable time will be given for its production
- 16.6 Where expertise is needed but not available within the GB, the GB may consider inviting appropriate non-governors to attend meetings or appointing associate members.

17. Discussion and Debate

- 17.1 The chair will ensure that all governors enjoy equality of opportunity to express their views.
- 17.2 The GB will receive and note, *without debate*, any decisions on matters which it has delegated to a committee or to an individual. Decisions will be recorded in the minutes.
- 17.3 Recommendations received from working groups will be recorded in the minutes, together with any related GB resolution.

18. Decision-making

- 18.1 Members of the GB recognise that all decisions must be made by the GB unless the GB has delegated the function to a committee or to an individual.
- 18.2 Only governors present at a meeting may vote; proxy voting is not allowed, except for consideration of a change of name of the school, when special procedures will apply as set out in the Regulations.
- 18.3 A simple majority decides any matter put to the vote. In the event of a tie, the chair has a casting or second vote – except in the case of a selection panel

deciding who, if any, candidate to recommend to the GB for appointment as head/deputy.

- 18.4 Voting in the election of the chair or vice-chair where there is a contest will be held by secret ballot. Otherwise voting will ordinarily be by show of hands, unless one or more governors request a secret ballot. There is no second or casting vote in the election of chair.
- 18.5 Decisions of the GB are binding upon all its members.
- 18.6 Decisions of the GB (or of any of its committees) may be amended or rescinded at a subsequent meeting of the governing body only if a proposal to amend or rescind appears as a specific agenda item

19. Urgent Action

- 19.1 The chair, or in their absence the vice-chair, has authority to take urgent action between meetings only where:
- a delay in dealing with the matter would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the school, a pupil, his/her parents, or a member of staff;
 - a meeting could not be called in sufficient time to deal with the matter; and
 - the matter is one which can be delegated to an individual under government regulations.
- 19.2 If the chair (or vice-chair) takes any urgent action between meetings, the facts will be reported to the next meeting of the GB.

20. Public Statements

- 20.1 Public statements on behalf of the GB will be made only by those delegated to make them.

21. Access to Meetings of the Governing Body

- 21.1 Apart from governors, the only people entitled to attend a meeting of the GB are the HT (where they have chosen not to be a governor), the Clerk and, where appropriate, Associate Members (AM). No substitute members are permitted.
- 21.2 AMs members may be required to leave a meeting where matters of a confidential nature relating to individual staff or pupil are discussed.
- 21.3 When the HT is absent, a member of the Senior Leadership Team may/will attend in their place but will have no vote (unless in the long-term absence of an HT who is also a governor).
- 21.4 The GB will decide who, other than those entitled to attend, may be admitted to a meeting and which of its meetings, if any, will be open to parents/the public.

- 21.5 The GB can require any non-governor present at a meeting to leave at any time.
- 21.6 If a meeting is to be opened to parents/the public, reasonable notice will be given
- 21.7 Any member of Staff can be invited to attend meetings of the GB as an observer/observers, as part of their professional development

22. Pecuniary and Personal Interest

- 22.1 The GB will maintain a register of the pecuniary interests of its members in a book signed by the relevant governor when an entry is made.
- 22.2 As appropriate, governors will draw attention to any pecuniary or other personal interest, whether that interest has previously been registered or not.
- 22.3 Anyone who is ordinarily entitled to attend GB or committee meetings (that is, governors, members of committees, AMs or HT) must withdraw and not vote on the issue if:
- there could be conflict between the personal interests of that person and the interests of the GB; or
 - where a fair hearing must be given and there is reasonable doubt about the individual's ability to act impartially on any matter.
- 22.4 When a committee is considering disciplinary action against an employee or against a pupil, or a matter arising from an alleged incident involving a pupil, a governor who has declared a personal interest may nevertheless attend the meeting to give evidence if he/she has made relevant accusations, or is a witness in the case.

23. Complaints and Staff Discipline

- 23.1 The GB will establish procedures for dealing with general complaints.
- 23.2 The GB will establish procedures for dealing with staff disciplinary matters and grievances.

24. Delegation of Functions

- 24.1 No action may be taken by an individual governor (including the chair and vice-chair except where acting in accordance with Standing Order 19.1) unless authority to do so has been delegated formally by resolution of the GB.
- 24.2 Where required under the school government regulations and in other cases in order to ensure the most efficient conduct of its business, the GB will:
- delegate work to committees, individual members of the GB and/or the HT, if not a governor;
 - set up working groups to provide information and/or make recommendations to the GB.

24.3 The arrangements for delegating functions will be reviewed annually by the full GB.

24.4 In delegating functions to individuals, the GB will have regard to the restrictions set out in Regulation 17 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

25. Committees

25.1 Committees to which the GB has delegated any of its functions will act strictly in accordance with the terms of delegation.

25.2 When establishing committees the GB will ensure compliance with the regulations concerning the constitution of the committees and will:

- determine the membership (including non-governors where permitted and appropriate);
- allow the committee to elect its chair;
- establish and record TORs;
- review the membership and terms of reference annually;
- decide whether or not to confer voting rights on any or all non-governors for those matter where non-governors are not prohibited from voting under the procedures regulations;
- determine when the committees shall meet
- determine arrangements for reporting back;
- review the need for, and the membership of, committees annually; set the quorum for each committee (minimum quorum is 3)

25.3 The HT has the right to attend any committee meetings, subject to the statutory rules on withdrawal.

25.4 AMs cannot vote on issues relating to admissions, pupil discipline, election or appointment of governors, the budget and financial commitments of the governing body, and cannot serve on committees relating to staff appointments, grievance, discipline and dismissal.

25.5 The GB will establish committees for the following purposes:

- a staff dismissal appeal
- a pupil discipline (exclusions)
- staff matters (pay, discipline and grievance)
- pay appeals

and panels for the following purposes:

- complaints
- PM of the HT

25.6 Where the HT has not been delegated the responsibilities, for dismissal of staff under the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, a dismissal committee must be appointed.

- 25.7 All committees and individuals with delegated powers will report in writing to the next meeting of the governing body about any decisions made or action taken.
- 25.8 All committees with delegated powers will keep formal minutes, and copies circulated to all governors within 15 working days of the meeting for information.
- 25.9 All meetings of committees will be clerked by a person who is not the headteacher.

26. Working Groups

- 26.1 In establishing working groups the GB will:
- determine the membership, including non-governors
 - determine procedures for reporting back.
- 26.2 The HT has the right to attend any working group meeting.
- 26.3 Working groups established for specific purposes will be discontinued when their work has been completed.
- 26.4 All working groups will report back, including recommendations where appropriate, to the next meeting of the relevant committee or the full GB.

27. Safeguarding Pupils

All Governors on first appointment and at any subsequent re-appointment will be required to undergo checks to determine suitability to have access to children and young people in accordance with any legal requirements or policy of the GB.