



# GOVERNING BODY STANDING ORDERS

Hedgewood School's Governing Body will operate at all times in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the School Governance Regulations, The Education School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations and all other relevant and subsequent legislation.

In addition to the requirements set out in legislation, the following procedures will apply to the operation of the Governing Body.

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## 1 Chair and Vice-Chair

- 1.1 The governing body must set the term of office for the chair and vice chair before the election takes place. This can be between one and four years. The term of office for each will end on a date agreed by the governing body. A governor can be appointed chair for a maximum of 8 years.
- 1.2 The governing body cannot conduct its business without an elected chair.
- 1.3 When the chair and vice-chair are due for election, the governing body will elect both positions from among its number (though excluding any employee of or a pupil at the school).
- 1.4 The governing body will decide in advance of the election the process of election for either or both positions.
- 1.5 If nobody has indicated willingness to stand for the office of chair, the meeting will be adjourned until a chair can be elected.
- 1.6 The clerk will take the chair when the chair is being elected. Otherwise the chair will conduct all meetings of the governing body except that, in his/her absence, the vice-chair will take the chair.
- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 If both the chair and vice-chair are absent from a meeting, the governing body will elect a chair for that meeting.
- 1.9 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 governing body. The election of chair will be a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.
- 1.10 If the vice-chair resigns, or has to relinquish the office for any reason, a successor will be elected at the next meeting of the governing body.
- 1.11 If both the chair and vice-chair resign, or have to relinquish their offices for any reason, the governing body will hold a special meeting within 15 days to elect their successors.
- 1.12 The chair and/or vice-chair can be removed from office by resolution of the governing body, unless the chair has been nominated by the Secretary of State pursuant to section 67 of the EIA 2006.

- 1.13 A resolution to remove the chair or vice-chair from office will not take effect unless the matter is specified as an item of business on the agenda. The governor proposing the removal must state his/her reasons for doing so at the meeting. The chair or vice-chair must be given the opportunity to make a statement in response before he/she withdraws from the meeting and the governing body votes on the proposal to remove the chair or vice-chair from office.

## **2 Calendar of Meetings**

- 2.1 The governing body will meet at least three times per academic year.
- 2.2 The governing body will normally set the dates for its meetings, including those of any committees for the next school year at the final meeting of the previous school year.

## **3 Timing and Duration of Meetings**

- 3.1 Meetings will start at times which are acceptable to the governing body and will be limited to two hours' duration.
- 3.2 Where the business has not been completed within the agreed time, those governors present may resolve to continue the meeting in order to deal with the business notified on the agenda or make arrangements for a further meeting to complete the business.
- 3.3 A meeting may be discontinued at any time if the governors so resolve. 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.

## **4 Alternative arrangements for governor participation at meetings**

- 4.1 Meetings may be held in person or remotely via a suitable platform (eg. Teams or Zoom).
- 4.2 The governing body may approve suitable alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings.
- 4.3 The Governing Body may agree to make decisions by email, and/or allow remote participation by all governors and the clerk.

## **5 Quorum**

- 5.1 The quorum for all business of the governing body is one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the total number of governors in place; not including any governor vacancies.
- 5.2 Meetings which become inquorate may continue but no legal decisions can be made.

## **6 Clerking**

- 6.1 The governing body will determine the arrangements for appointing a clerk for meetings of the full governing body and committees.
- 6.2 Governors and the headteacher cannot be clerk to the governing body.
- 6.3 The headteacher cannot be appointed as clerk to a committee.
- 6.4 If the clerk does not attend a meeting the governors present at the meeting can appoint a member of the governing body or committee (but not the headteacher) to act as clerk for that meeting.
- 6.5 The governing body can remove their clerk from office by resolution at a governing body meeting. If the school does not have a delegated budget, the local authority may dismiss the clerk and appoint a substitute, but the local authority must consult the

governing body before doing so.

## **7 Associate Members**

- 7.1 The governing body can appoint associate members to serve on one or more governing body committees and attend full governing body meetings.
- 7.2 An associate member may be removed from office by the governing body at any time.
- 7.3 Associate members are appointed as members of committees established by the governing body or as members of the governing body. They are appointed for a period of between one and four years and can be reappointed at the end of their term of office. Associate members are not governors and are not recorded on the Instrument of Government.
- 7.4 Associate Members do not have the right to vote at governing body meetings. The governing body can give limited voting rights to associate members on committees at the time of appointment.
- 7.5 Associate members cannot count towards a quorum for any meeting of the full governing body or committee on which they serve.

## **8 Withdrawal from meetings**

- 8.1 Governors will be required to withdraw from a meeting under circumstances set out in Regulation 16 of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013.
- 8.2 If there is a dispute about a person attending a governing body meeting being required to withdraw, the matter of withdrawal shall be determined by the governors present at the meeting.

## **9 Convening meetings**

- 9.1 All meetings will be convened by the clerk, in accordance with the arrangements made by the governing body, but subject to (a) any direction from the chair where a matter is urgent and (b) any requisition signed by three governors.

## **10 Notice of Meetings**

- 10.1 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) each governor, (b) the headteacher (whether or not that person is a governor), (c) any associate member and (d) the local authority, where an agenda item for the meeting involves consideration of a change of school category.
- 10.2 Non-receipt of notice of a meeting will not invalidate the meeting
- 10.3 Notices of meetings, and the accompanying agenda, will be made available at the school, at all reasonable times, for inspection by anyone wishing to see them.

## **11 Agenda**

- 11.1 The agenda will be prepared by the clerk in accordance with any determination of the governing body and in consultation with the chair and the headteacher and where the clerk is also the clerk to any committees the chair of the committee and the headteacher.
- 11.2 Any governor may place an item on the agenda by writing to the clerk.
- 11.3 Wherever possible papers that inform agenda items will be sent to governors with the agenda.

## **12 Late Items/Any Other Business**

- 12.1 The agenda will include 'Notification of AOB' immediately after 'Apologies for Absence' and any governor wishing to raise an urgent meeting item must give notice at this time.
- 12.2 The governing body will decide whether any such item is to be discussed or, if appropriate, deferred to a subsequent meeting.

## **13 Suspension of Governors**

- 13.1 The governing body may suspend a governor for a period of up to six months under circumstances set out in Regulation 17 of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013.
- 13.2 A governor can only be suspended if one or more of the following grounds apply:
- the governor is paid to work in the school and is the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to his/her employment
  - the governor is the subject of any court or tribunal proceedings, the outcome of which may be that he/she is disqualified from continuing to hold office as a governor under Schedule 6 of the Constitution Regulations
  - the governor has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the school's ethos or with the religious character and has brought or is likely to bring the school or the governing body or his office into disrepute
  - the governor is in breach of his/her duty of confidentiality to the school or the staff or to the pupils
- 13.3 Any motion to suspend a governor must be specified as an agenda item of the meeting for which at least seven days' notice must be given.
- 13.4 A governor who is suspended must be given notice of any meetings and must be sent agendas, reports and papers for any meetings during their suspension.

## **14 Governors' Expenses**

- 14.1 The governing body will prepare a policy on the payment of expenses of governors in accordance with Part 6 of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013.

## **15 Attendance**

- 15.1 The clerk will keep a record of those governors and all other persons present at meetings of the governing body or any of its committees.
- 15.2 Where a governor sends an apology for absence with reason, the governing body will decide whether to 'consent' to the absence and the clerk will record the decision in the minutes (A copy of the approved draft minutes will be sent as soon as possible to the governor concerned).

## **16 Minutes of Meetings**

- 16.1 Any dissenting views will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, if that is the wish of one or more governors present.
- 16.2 Action will be taken on the basis of decisions and need not await the approval of the minutes at the next meeting.
- 16.3 Copies of the draft minutes, once 'approved' by the chair, will be sent to all members of the governing body.
- 16.4 The approval of the minutes of the previous meeting will be on the agenda of every

meeting of the governing body and once approved will be considered a true record (subject to any agreed amendments).

- 16.5 Those matters which the governing body determines shall remain confidential will be minuted separately and such minutes will not be made publicly available.
- 16.6 Approved draft minutes, and subsequently the approved minutes, will be made available at the school on request.
- 16.7 Minutes made available for inspection will include papers forming part of the meeting
- 16.8 A copy of the signed minutes will be sent to the LA if requested.

## **17 Confidentiality of Proceedings**

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

## **18 Correspondence**

- 18.1 All incoming correspondence to the governing body (other than any concerning a complaint) is for the attention of the whole governing body, 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 governing body for action or information as appropriate. The chair will report upon any correspondence on which he/she has already taken urgent action.

## **19 Information and Advice**

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

## **20 Discussion and Debate**

- 20.1 The chair will ensure that meetings are run effectively, focussing on priorities and making best use of time available and ensuring that all governors enjoy equality of opportunity to express their views and participate in decision making.
- 20.2 The governing body 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.
- 20.3 Recommendations received from working groups will be recorded in the minutes, together with any related governing body resolution.

## **21 Decision-making**

- 21.1 Members of the governing body recognise that all decisions must be made by the governing body unless the governing body has delegated the function to a committee or to an individual.
- 21.2 Every question to be decided at a meeting of the governing body is to be determined by a majority of the votes of the governors present and voting on the question; proxy voting is not allowed. Voting by telephone conferencing is only permitted where the governing body have adopted alternative arrangements for governor participation as set out in Section 4 above.
- 21.3 Where there is an equal division of votes the chair (or the person acting as chair for the purpose of the meeting) has a second or casting vote – except in the case of a selection panel deciding who, if any, candidate to recommend to the governing body for appointment as head/deputy.
- 21.4 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.
- 21.5 Decisions of the governing body are binding upon all its members.
- 21.6 Decisions of the governing body (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.

## **22 Urgent Action**

- 22.1 The chair, or in his or her 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
  - the matter is one which can be delegated to an individual under regulations
- 22.2 If the chair (or vice-chair) takes any urgent action between meetings, the facts will be reported to the next meeting of the governing body.

## **23 Public Statements**

- 23.1 Public statements on behalf of the governing body will be made only by the Chair or those delegated to make them.

## **24 Access to Meetings of the Governing Body**

- 24.1 Apart from governors, the only people entitled to attend a meeting of the governing body are the headteacher (whether or not they are a governor), the clerk, where appropriate, associate members and any such other persons as the governing body may determine. No substitute members are permitted.
- 24.2 Associate members may be required to leave a meeting where matters of a confidential nature relating to individual staff or pupil are discussed.
- 24.3 When the headteacher is absent, the deputy headteacher will attend in his/her place but will have no vote (unless in the long-term absence of the head, the deputy has been appointed acting headteacher).
- 24.4 The governing body can require any non-governor present at a meeting to leave at any time.

- 24.5 If a meeting is to be opened to parents/the public, reasonable notice will be given.
- 24.6 The deputy headteacher/s will be invited to attend meetings of the governing body as observer/observers, as part of their professional development.
- 24.7 The headteacher may invite officers (deputy headteacher, bursar, head of department etc.) to attend meetings on an occasional or regular basis. All officers are there in an advisory role and have no voting rights, unless they have an additional role such as staff governor.

## **25 Pecuniary Interests and Other Specified Conflict of Interest**

- 25.1 The governing body will maintain a register of the pecuniary and personal interests of its members.
- 25.2 As appropriate, governors will draw attention to any pecuniary or other personal interest, whether that interest has previously been registered or not.
- 25.3 The register of interests will be published on the website and reviewed on an annual basis.
- 25.4 A governor must withdraw from a meeting, if he/she (or a close relative or partner):
- stands to gain financially from a matter under consideration
  - has a personal interest in a matter under consideration
  - is a relative of a pupil, a parent or an employee being discussed
  - is a school employee, other than the headteacher, and the pay or performance of school employees is under discussion
  - is the headteacher and the pay or performance of the headteacher is under discussion
- 25.5 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.

## **26 Complaints and Staff Discipline**

- 26.1 The governing body will establish procedures for dealing with general complaints.
- 26.2 The governing body will establish procedures for dealing with staff disciplinary matters and staff grievances.

## **27 Delegation of Functions**

- 27.1 No action may be taken by an individual governor (including the chair and vice-chair except where acting in accordance with Standing Order 22.1) unless authority to do so has been delegated formally by resolution of the governing body.
- 27.2 Where required under the school governance regulations and in other cases in order to ensure the most efficient conduct of its business, the governing body will:
- delegate work to committees, individual members of the governing body and/or the headteacher, if not a governor
  - set up working groups to provide information and/or make recommendations to the governing body
- 27.3 The arrangements for delegating functions will be reviewed annually by the full governing body.
- 27.4 In delegating functions to individuals, the governing body will have regard to the

restrictions set out in Regulation 18 of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013.

## **28 Committees**

- 28.1 Committees to which the governing body has delegated any of its functions will act strictly in accordance with the terms of delegation.
- 28.2 When establishing committees, the governing body will ensure compliance with the regulations concerning the constitution of the committees and will:
- determine the membership (including non-governors where permitted and appropriate)
  - appoint the chair of each committee annually/allow the committee to elect its chair
  - establish and record terms of reference
  - 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 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)
- 28.3 The headteacher has the right to attend any committee meetings, subject to the statutory rules on withdrawal.
- 28.4 The governing body will establish committees for the following purposes:
- a staff appeal (pay, discipline and grievance)
  - staff matters (pay, discipline and grievance)
  - pupil discipline (exclusions)
  - HT Performance Management
  - And any others as required
- 28.5 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.
- 28.6 No governor who served on the relevant first committee or had any previous involvement with the matter under appeal may serve on an appeal committee.
- 28.7 All committees with delegated powers will keep formal minutes, and copies will be circulated to all governors.
- 28.8 All meetings of committees will be clerked by a person who is not the headteacher.

## **29 Working Groups**

- 29.1 In establishing working groups the governing body will:
- determine the purpose and membership, including non-governors, and the method of appointing the chair
- 29.2 The headteacher has the right to attend any working group meeting.
- 29.3 Working groups established for specific purposes will be discontinued when their work has been completed.
- 29.4 All working groups will present a written report, including recommendations where appropriate, to the next meeting of the governing body/committee.

### **30 Safeguarding Pupils**

- 30.1 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 governing body.
- 30.2 Any governor refusing to undertake the checks will be disqualified from membership of the governing body.

### **31 Code of Conduct**

- 31.1 Every governor will be requested to sign the Code of Conduct declaration at first appointment and each subsequent year of appointment at the autumn term meeting.

### **32 The Removal of Governors**

- 32.1 In exceptional circumstances, the governing body may, by majority decision, remove a governor regardless of whether they were appointed or elected to the role. The only exception to this will be the ex-officio governor.
- 32.2 Any governor removed in this way will be disqualified from serving or continuing to serve as a school governor for five years from the date of their removal. This applies to all schools, not just the school a governor has been removed from.
- 32.3 The process for the removal of a governor will be set out in a separate document and will include the opportunity for a governor to hear the complaint against them at the earliest opportunity and also the option of an appeal.
- 32.4 The school will keep a record of any governor removal for a period of five years to day upon which the governor was removed.