



Walter Infant School and Nursery

Full Governing Body

Terms of Reference

DOCUMENT HISTORY

| Version | Action | By | Date |
|----------------|---|--------------------|--|
| 1.0 | New Terms of reference | Chair of Governors | Approved by FGB 22.3.17 |
| 1.0 | Reviewed – no changes made. | FGB | Approved 13.9.17 |
| 2.0 | Reviewed and brought into line with Code of Conduct | FGB | Approved September 18 th 2018 |

Next Review Date: September 2019

1. Purpose

The Full Governing Body (FGB) works as a 'whole team' and has the principle focus to ensuring the children in the school have the best education possible' to achieve this the FGB has the following core strategic functions:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the headteacher
- Monitoring the educational performance of the school and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the headteacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

Overseeing financial probity, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

The Governing Body recognises that the headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day to day management of the school and the implementation of the curriculum

The governing body will allocate assignments or activities from the business of the meetings which will be recorded in the minutes.

The governing body may wish to delegate monitoring activities to groups or individuals. This could apply to statutory functions, and/or the priorities of the School Development Plan.

In each case where a function has been delegated there is a statutory duty to report any action or decision to the governing body at the next meeting.

2. Membership

The governing body will ensure it has sufficient governors to undertake its duties effectively and in accordance with the Guide to the Law for Governing Bodies.

The governing body consists of:

- Seven co-opted governors
- Two Parent governors
- One LA governor
- One Head Teacher
- One Staff governors

All governors will be appointed for a 4-year term of office.

The governing body will ensure that it creates an environment which enables it to recruit and retain effective governors and which encourages the participation of all groups and sections of the community. Mentors will be allocated to new governors.

2.1 Election of chair and vice-chair

The chair and vice chair will be elected for one year at a time. Candidates may self-nominate at any time in advance of a vote. Candidates will be able to make a personal statement to the meeting before the vote if they wish.

The clerk will take the chair for the election of the chair. Where an election is contested, voting will be by secret ballot with the candidate receiving the largest number of votes being elected.

The Chair of Governor's will also appoint a Clerk to the governing body this will be a paid role and they will be employed by the school.

3. Meetings

An annual calendar of dates for committee meetings will be set and published.

The governing body will hold the minimum number of meetings necessary to ensure the strategic business of the school is properly addressed.

For the meeting to be quorate 6 governors including the Headteacher are to be present.

Where a governor's pattern of attendance is causing concern this will be alerted to by the clerk or the chair.

The governing body will ensure that there is an opportunity at least annually for all parents who wish to do so to meet with governors.

The Full Governing Body meeting will receive the minutes of the Finance committee and other committees that maybe be develop as a result of the work of the governing body.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the headteacher.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.

- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.
- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing board.
- We will actively support and challenge the headteacher.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints we will follow the procedures established by the governing body
- We will actively support and challenge the executive leaders
- We will accept and respect the difference in roles between the governing body and staff, ensuring that we work collectively for the benefit of the organisation
- We will respect the role of executive leaders and their responsibility for the day to day management of the organisation and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements
- We agree to adhere to the school's rules and policies and the procedures of the governing body as set out by the relevant governing documents and law
- When formally speaking or in writing in our governor role we will ensure our comments reflect current organisational policy even if they might be different to our personal views
- When communicating in our private capacity (including on social media) we will be mindful of and strive to uphold the reputation of the organisation

4.1 The Role of the Clerk

The Clerk will be employed by the school. The purpose of the clerk's role is to:

- Provide advice to the governing body on governance, constitutional and procedural matters.
- Provide effective administrative support to the governing body and its committees.
- Ensure the governing body is properly constituted.
- Manage information effectively in accordance with legal requirements.

The clerk is the 'constitutional conscience' of the governing body and s/he should be accountable to the governing body. It is therefore important that there is a clear separation of functions and lines of reporting. The main responsibility for managing the relationship between the clerk and the governing body should rest with the chair of governors. Governing bodies need to make sure that the clerk receives adequate remuneration, is annually appraised, and receives appropriate training/support.

5. Commitment of the Governing Body

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.

- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body
- When visiting the school in a personal capacity (i.e. as a parent or carer), we will maintain our underlying responsibility as a governor
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for induction , training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We accept that in the interests of open government, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing body, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school's website.
- In the interests of transparency we accept that information relating to governors/trustees/academy/ committee members will be collected and logged on the DfE's national database of governors (Get Information about Schools)

6. Relationships

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors, the clerk to the governing body and school staff both in and outside of meetings
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.
- We are prepared to answer queries from other board members in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the headteacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

7. Confidentiality

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing board meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
- We will ensure that all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately

8. Conflicts of interest

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the governing board's business

in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school's website.

- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing board.

9. Breach of this code of conduct

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the chair and the chair will investigate; the governing board will only use suspension/removal as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways.
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate.