

STANDING ORDERS FOR THE GOVERNING BODY

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1. Standing orders are rules established by the governing body to regulate the work of the governors. They are in addition to any government regulation and are optional.

Appointment of governors

2. Before taking up their appointment, all new governors must be subject to a check of their criminal records.

3. Newly appointed governors must have completed the necessary checks and been confirmed by the local authority before they can attend meetings.

Meetings

4. The governing body must meet at least once per term. Unless otherwise agreed by the governing body, ordinary meetings of the governing body and its committees will normally be held at the school and be limited to two hours.

5. Where business has not been completed within the agreed time, it will become part of the agenda for the next meeting of the governing body. If those governors present decide that the business is of an urgent nature, it should agree to continue the meeting in order to deal with said business.
6. The quorum for governing body meetings is 50% of the governors in post. Meetings which are inquorate shall not go ahead. Meetings that become inquorate may go ahead but no decisions may be taken.
7. Any three members of the governing body may request a meeting by submitting a written request to the Clerk to the governing body outlining the purpose of the meeting.
8. The governing body has agreed that it is acceptable to send agendas and supporting papers via e-mail provided the governing body members are able to receive electronic information. Written notice and supporting papers shall be sent to the home address of any member of the governing body (including the headteacher) or associate member who specifically requests these documents in hard copy.
9. The governing body shall receive notice of any meeting of the governing body or its committees together with the agenda and supporting papers no later than seven days before the meeting. (In the event that the chair has convened an urgent meeting, this regulation shall be disregarded). Any additional documents to be considered at a meeting that have not been distributed in advance must be available at the school at least one hour before the meeting commences. Governors must be notified if any documents are to be tabled in this way.

Business and pecuniary interests

10. A register of pecuniary interests will be held by the Clerk. At the business meeting at the start of the academic year, each governor shall be required to sign the register. New governors shall be required to sign the register as soon as their appointment is confirmed.
11. "Business Interests" will be a standing agenda item and governors are required to declare any business or personal interest in any agenda item.

Attendance at meetings

12. The Clerk to the governing body will keep a record of all attendances at governing body meetings.
13. The time of arrival and/or departure of any governor will be recorded in the minutes.
14. In the event that a governor is unable to attend a meeting, that governor must contact the Clerk directly to offer apologies. If the governor is not able to contact the Clerk, then that governor should contact the chair or, as a last resort, the school office.
15. Where a governor has offered apologies for absence, the governing body will decide whether the apology should be accepted and this shall be shown on the minutes of the meeting.
16. If a governor fails to attend meetings for a continuous period of six months and has failed to submit apologies, or the governing body has not accepted those apologies, the governor shall be disqualified in accordance with the regulations.

Agenda

17. The agenda will be organised by the Clerk in consultation with the Head and Chair.
18. Any governor may place an item on the agenda by contacting the Clerk not less than 7 days before the meeting.
19. Any governor wishing to raise an urgent item at the meeting must give notice at the start of the meeting. The governing body will decide whether any such item will be discussed or dealt with at a subsequent meeting.

Minutes

20. Within 7 days of the meeting, the draft minutes will be sent by the Clerk to the Chair and Head for approval.
21. Those minutes which the governing body determines as confidential will be minuted on a separate sheet and copies will not be publicly available.
22. Recommendations received from committees or working groups will be recorded in the minutes.
23. A copy of the minutes will be sent to all governors and the relevant officer of the local authority.
24. Minutes from committees and working groups should be approved in the same way and sent to all governors, including the Clerk (if the Clerk does not take the minutes for committee meetings).

Election of chair and vice chair

25. The election of Chair will take place annually, during the last meeting of the Summer term to allow for any handover and preparation to take place over the Summer holidays. The annual election of the Vice-Chair will take place during the first meeting of the Autumn term. During the election, the clerk to the governing body shall act as Chair. If the clerk is absent, a member of the governing body not standing for election shall act as Chair.
26. Nominations for chair shall be sought by the clerk to the governing body in advance of the meeting and at the meeting at which the election is due to take place. If no nominations are received, a member of the governing body shall act as a chair for the meeting and the election will be adjourned until the next meeting.
27. If more than one nomination is received for either post, the election shall be by secret ballot. In the event of a secret ballot, the nominees shall withdraw from the room and not vote. If the secret ballot results in a tie, the vote will be taken again. If a tie still exists, the nominees will be asked to agree among themselves who will take the position of chair and vice chair.
28. Should the chair of the governing body resign or have to relinquish their office, a successor will be appointed at the next meeting of the full governing body.
29. In the event that both the chair and the vice-chair resign from office or have to relinquish their office, the governing body shall hold a special meeting within ten days.

30. The chair can be removed from office by the governors following the procedures set out in Regulation 7 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

Associate members

31. The governing body can choose whether to appoint associate members in addition to those stated in the Instrument of Governance.

32. When appointing an associate member, the governing body must also decide what term of office to give the associate member (from one to four years) and whether or not to assign voting rights. These decisions must be recorded in the governing body minutes.

33. Any voting rights apply to the committee(s) to which they are appointed, but there are some aspects of governing body decision making that associate members may not vote on: any decision concerning admissions, pupil discipline, election or appointment of governors, the budget and financial commitments of the governing body. Associate members can be chairs of committees, but are not part of the quorum for any meeting.

Correspondence

34. All incoming correspondence to the governing body is for the attention of the whole governing body whether addressed to the chair, Clerk or governors.

35. The Clerk will receive and log all correspondence to the governing body.

36. The Clerk will present all significant items to the next meeting of the governing body.

37. Any governor who wishes to resign must put this in writing to the clerk, with copies to the chair and the headteacher.

Debate

38. The chair will ensure that all governors enjoy equality of opportunity to express their views.

39. Any issues relating to the day-to-day management of the school need to be discussed with the headteacher in advance of the regular meetings.

40. The chair will regulate all debates.

Decision making

41. All decisions must be made by the governing body unless an individual or a committee has been delegated to deal with a specific issue.

42. Only governors present at a meeting may vote. Proxy voting is not allowed.

43. Any matter put to the vote is decided by a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the chair has a second vote.

44. Voting will be by a show of hands unless one governor requests a secret ballot.

45. Where items of “any other business” are raised, no voting will be permitted during the discussion. If such a voting decision is required, the matter will be deferred to the next scheduled meeting, or an extraordinary meeting in urgent matters.

46. Decisions of the governing body are binding on all its members.

Urgent action

47. The chair (or in the absence of the chair, the vice chair) has the authority to take urgent action (on matters that are permitted to be delegated to an individual) between meetings where the delay in exercising a function is likely to be seriously detrimental to the interests of the school, a pupil at the school or their parents, or a person who works at the school. All such actions are to be reported to the next meeting of the governing body by the chair or Clerk.

Public statements

48. No governor will make any public statement about any matter concerning the school without the authority of the governing body.

Information and advice

49. The relevant director of the local authority, or their representative, will be invited to attend meetings in order to inform and advise the governing body.

50. Where expertise is needed but not available within the governing body, an appropriate non-governor may be invited in a non-voting capacity.

51. The members of the governing body shall adhere to these Standing Orders and all policies agreed by the governing body at all times.

Access to meetings

52. When the headteacher is absent, a deputy or assistant headteacher, if not already a staff governor, will be permitted to attend, but will have no vote.

53. A deputy or assistant headteacher may attend meetings of the governing body as an observer, as part of their professional development.

54. The governing body will decide who, other than those entitled to attend, may be admitted to a meeting and which meetings will be open to parents or the public.

Delegation of functions

55. No action may be taken by an individual governor unless authority to do so has been delegated formally by resolution of the governing body.

Committees

56. Committees to which the governing body has delegated any of its functions will act strictly in accordance with the terms of the delegation.

57. When establishing committees, the governing body will:

- determine the membership
- select or confirm the chair
- establish the terms of reference (in consultation with the committee)
- determine procedures for reporting back.

58. The governing body may co-opt non-governors to committees but they may not form a majority and have no vote unless the governing body specifically gives them a vote.

59. The headteacher has a right to attend any committee meeting.

Working groups

60. When establishing working groups, the governing body will:

- determine the membership
- select or confirm the chair
- establish the terms of reference (in consultation with the group)
- determine procedures for reporting back.

61. The headteacher has a right to attend any working group meeting.

Confidentiality

62. All governors have a duty not to discuss any confidential item of governors' business outside the meeting.

Revision

63. The governing body will review these Standing Orders at the Annual Meeting at the start of each school year.