



Fen Ditton C. P. School

GOVERNOR CODE OF PRACTICE

STANDING ORDERS

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES

| Review Schedule | |
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| Last Updated | Next Planned Review and Update |
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| Governor Signature: | |

1 CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE GOVERNING BODY - FEN DITTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

1.1 GENERAL

- 1.1.1 The main aim of the school is to raise the educational achievement of all its pupils.
- 1.1.2 The Governing Body will contribute most effectively to this aim by focusing on its three roles:
 - a. to provide a strategic view of where the school is heading
 - b. to act as a critical friend
 - c. to hold the school to account for the educational standards it achieves and the quality of education it provides.
- 1.1.3 Governors have responsibility for determining, monitoring and keeping under review the policies, plans and procedures within which the school operates. The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, day to day management of the school and operation of the curriculum.
- 1.1.4 All governors have equal status. Although governors are appointed and elected by different groups, their central concern is the welfare of the school as a whole.
- 1.1.5 Governors have a general duty to act fairly and without prejudice at all times.
- 1.1.6 Insofar as they have, or share, responsibility for the employment of staff, governors should fulfil all reasonable expectations of a good employer.
- 1.1.7 Governors should consider carefully how their own decisions might affect other schools.
- 1.1.8 Governors should encourage open government and should be seen to do so.
- 1.1.9 Governors do not act alone but as members of a corporate team. Individual governors have power only when it is designated specifically to them by the whole Governing Body.

1.2 COMMITMENT

- 1.2.1 Being a governor involves significant amounts of time and energy. Careful regard should be paid to this when agreeing to serve or to continue to serve on the Governing Body of a school.
- 1.2.2 All governors should involve themselves actively in the work of the Governing Body and accept a fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees.
- 1.2.3 Regular attendance at meetings of both the full Governing Body and committees is essential.
- 1.2.4 Governors should know the school well and take opportunities to visit it and become involved in school activities.

1.3 RELATIONSHIPS

- 1.3.1 Governors should strive to operate as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- 1.3.2 Governors should develop effective working relationships with the Headteacher, staff, parents and the LEA and their local community.

1.4 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 1.4.1 Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the Governing Body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.

- 1.4.2 The majority of a Governing Body's business is not confidential. Schools are public institutions funded with public money. However, there may be occasions when it is necessary either for the Governing Body or a committee to consider confidential matters.
- 1.4.3 The regulations specify that any consideration of the following matters should be treated as confidential:
- a. matters relating to a named teacher or other person employed at or proposed to be employed at the school
 - b. a named pupil or candidate for admission to the school; or
 - c. any matter which by reason of its nature, the Governing Body is satisfied should be dealt with on a confidential basis.
- 1.4.4 Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.
- 1.4.5 Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the Governing Body.

1.5 CONDUCT

- 1.5.1 Governors should express their views openly within meetings but accept collective responsibility for all decisions.
- 1.5.2 Governors should only speak or act on behalf of the Governing Body when they have been specifically authorised to do so.
- 1.5.3 All visits to school should be undertaken within a framework which has been established by the Governing Body and agreed with the Headteacher.
- 1.5.4 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.
- 1.5.5 Governors have a responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and reputation of the school. Their actions within the school community should reflect this.
- 1.5.6 Any pecuniary interest that a governor may have in connection with the Governing Body's business must be recorded in the register of pecuniary interests.
- 1.5.7 Where an interest is declared, the governor must leave the meeting while the item is under discussion.

1.6 PUBLICATION OF DETAILS

- 1.6.1 Governors hold an important public office and their identity should be known to their school and wider communities. In the interests of transparency, a governing body should publish on its website up-to-date details of its governance arrangements in a readily accessible format.
- 1.6.2 The same information needs to be disclosed for associate members making it clear if they have voting rights on a committee
- 1.6.3 Any governor failing to provide information to enable the governing body to fulfil their responsibilities may be in breach of the code of conduct and as a result be bringing the governing body into disrepute. In such cases the governing body should consider suspending the governor. In the case of associate members the governing body can remove them.

1.7 DBS CHECKS

- 1.7.1 All governors must hold an enhanced criminal record certificate (DBS). Where a governor is elected or appointed and does not hold an enhanced criminal record certificate, the governing body must apply for such a certificate in respect of that governor within 21 days after his or her appointment or election.
- 1.7.2 Where a governor fails to provide the necessary documentation to enable a DBS check to be carried out within the 21 days; the chair should remind the governor of the required documentation, give a reasonable deadline (e.g. 2 weeks) for it to be provided and a DBS check to be undertaken. The chair should make it clear to the governor that if the deadline is not met they will be disqualified in line with the regulations.
- 1.7.3 During this period without a DBS check the governor should not be allowed to attend any governing body meetings. If the governor fails to provide the necessary information by the deadline, the clerk should send the governor a letter of disqualification and keep a copy on file. The disqualification letter should be copied to any appointing body, for example, the LA for an LA governor and the Diocese for a foundation governor. The chair should inform the governing body at the next meeting and ensure the action is captured in the minutes.

1.8 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 1.8.1 Governor training and development is important. It benefits the school and individual governors and can help to develop effective teamwork. Governors are expected to undertake training to further their individual interests within the Governing Body and the work of the Governing Body as a whole.

1.9 MENTORING

- 1.9.1 An experienced governor who acts as a mentor to new governors can provide support and a listening ear for all aspects of the work of the Governing Body. Governors should be prepared to act as mentors, as required. The Chair of Governors is responsible for allocating a mentor to new governors.

1.10 MEETINGS

- 1.10.1 Individual governors do not have any authority in a school. It is the decisions of all the governors together that carry authority. The activities that governors undertake outside meetings can be seen as preparation for the times when the Governing Body “goes live” – in a meeting.
- 1.10.2 Meetings charter

1.10.2.1 As a governor I expect:

- a. people to attend regularly (see Standing Orders point 4, regulation 11) and be punctual
- b. an agenda and relevant documents to reach me at least seven days before every meeting
- c. an agenda that makes clear the purpose of each item
- d. a Chair who keeps to the agenda, paces the meeting so that time is given to each matter in proportion to its importance, draws on all members for contributions and keeps discussions to the point
- e. my contribution to be heard and others to contribute to the discussion
- f. the decision-making process to be quite clear
- g. governors to work together and not to be stubbornly partisan
- h. governors to take collective responsibility for decisions
- i. minutes that summarise views succinctly, record decisions accurately and are made available, in draft form, soon after each meeting.

1.10.2.2 Others can expect me to:

- a. attend regularly and be punctual
- b. read the agenda, minutes and other papers before the meeting and note items I want to say something about
- c. bring my papers (or electronic equivalent) to the meeting
- d. make relevant and positive contributions
- e. listen to and consider what others say
- f. accept my share of collective responsibility, even for those decisions that I do not personally agree with.

1.11 VISITING THE SCHOOL

1.11.1 Governors do not have an automatic right to enter the school. However, they do need to have the opportunity to arrange visits to the school in order to see governors' policies in action and to understand how the school works.

1.11.2 When making visits to the school, governors will follow the school's Governor Visits policy.

1.11.3 After the visit the governor will report back, in writing, to the Governing Body.

2 STANDING ORDERS

2.1 ELECTION AND REMOVAL OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR (REGULATION 5)

2.1.1 The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected to office for not less than one year.

2.1.2 Staff governors cannot be Chair or Vice Chair of the Governing Body.

2.1.3 All candidates must withdraw whilst the election process is undertaken and shall not vote (Regulation 14 & Schedule).

2.1.4 If the Chair/Vice Chair resigns mid-term the new Chair/Vice Chair will be elected for the full term of office agreed by the Governing Body.

2.1.5 The Clerk should manage the election procedures.

2.1.6 Written or oral nominations should be notified to the Clerk before the meeting at which the election will take place.

2.1.7 Additional nominations can be received on the day.

2.1.8 All nominations can be self-nomination or nominations from colleagues. Elections should be by secret ballot. If there is only one candidate the ballot should accept the candidate.

2.1.9 In the event of a tie the decision will be based on the toss of a coin.

2.2 URGENT ACTION (REGULATION 6)

2.2.1 The Chair (or the Vice Chair if the Chair is absent) may take urgent action in circumstances where a delay may be seriously detrimental to the interest of:

- a. the school
- b. any pupil at the school (or his/her parent)
- c. any person who works at the school.

2.2.2 A meeting can be called in fewer than 7 days in an emergency and therefore 'urgent' should be interpreted as anything that cannot wait until such a meeting could be called.

2.2.3 Urgent action should be only used in extreme circumstances.

2.3 APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL OF THE CLERK (REGULATION 8)

2.3.1 The Governing Body shall appoint the Clerk to the Governing Body.

2.3.2 The Clerk to the Governing Body must not be:

- a. a governor
- b. an associate member
- c. Headteacher of the school

2.3.3 In an emergency a governor [not the Headteacher] may Clerk for that meeting only.

2.3.4 The Governing Body may remove a Clerk from office by resolution.

2.4 MEETINGS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GOVERNING BODY (REGULATION 10)

2.4.1 The following persons have a right to attend all meetings of the Governing Body:

- a. Headteacher
- b. All governors (unless suspended)
- c. Clerk
- d. Associate members of the Governing Body (unless the Governing Body requires them to leave for items relating to an individual member of staff or pupil)
- e. In certain circumstances the LA may also have a right to attend (See also Regulation 14 & Section 8 below).

2.4.2 The Governing Body decides whether to have associate members and who they shall be.

2.4.3 The Governing Body may invite other persons to attend at their discretion (e.g. Officers of the LA).

2.4.4 The Governing Body should decide whether meetings are open to the public for non-confidential matters.

2.4.5 There will be at least 6 meetings of the full Governing Body each school year.

2.4.6 Meetings of the full Governing Body must be convened by the Clerk.

2.4.7 The agenda/reports/papers shall be sent to the governors 7 days before the meeting.

2.4.8 A governor who without the consent of the Governing Body fails to attend full Governing Body meetings for a period of 6 months is disqualified (School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2003: Regulation 20 & Schedule 6).

2.4.9 A record (in the minutes of the meeting) of Governing Body consent or otherwise for absence is essential in order to invoke disqualification.

2.4.10 If no apology is received then no consent can be granted.

2.5 QUORUM (REGULATION 12)

2.5.1 For all meetings of the Full Governing Body the quorum will be 50% of the number of governors listed on the Instrument of Government including vacancies (rounded up). Vacancies include the place reserved for the Headteacher, if the Head has notified the Clerk (in writing) that he/she does not wish to be a governor of the school.

2.5.2 Associate members must not be included in the calculation for quorum.

2.6 VOTING (REGULATION 12)

2.6.1 All matters are decided by a majority vote. In the event of a tie the Chair (or Acting Chair) has an additional (casting) vote.

2.7 MINUTES AND PAPERS (REGULATION 13)

2.7.1 Minutes should be prepared by the Clerk and signed minutes must be available for public inspection. Excluding confidential items:

- a. items which refer to an individual parent pupil or member of staff
- b. other items the Governing Body deems confidential).

2.7.2 Draft minutes that have been approved by the Chair should be made available as soon as possible after the meeting. These should be marked 'subject to ratification' (excluding confidential items).

2.7.3 The way individual governors vote, and their opinions should be regarded as confidential.

2.8 RESTRICTIONS ON PARTICIPATION (REGULATION 14 & SCHEDULE)

2.8.1 Governors must complete a register detailing pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest and withdraw from the meeting if appropriate.

2.8.2 Each governor must declare at the start of any meeting if there is an item on the agenda which poses a potential conflict of interest or where a fair hearing is required and his/her impartiality is in doubt. In such a case, the governor concerned must withdraw from the discussion and may not vote.

2.8.3 In the event of a dispute the Governing Body decides whether the individual should withdraw.

2.9 SUSPENSION (REGULATION 17)

2.9.1 A Governing Body can suspend a member of the Governing Body for a prescribed period not exceeding 6 months (refer to Regulations). This should be used as a last resort.

2.10 DELEGATE TO COMMITTEES AND INDIVIDUALS (REGULATIONS 18 TO 20)

2.10.1 The full Governing Body, in accordance with regulations, must annually decide any delegation to committees or individuals. These requirements do not apply to other working groups without delegated powers.

- 2.10.2 The Governing Body shall establish every year such committees as are required in accordance with the regulations.
- 2.10.3 **(Regulation 22)** The committee shall decide the quorum which must be at least 3 governors.
- 2.10.4 **(Regulations 22)** A chair shall be appointed annually to each committee by the Governing Body or elected by the committee, as determined by the Governing Body.
- 2.10.5 **(Regulations 24)** The Governing Body must agree the names of associate members of committees and whether they have been granted voting rights (associate members must not outnumber the governors).
- 2.10.6 Associate members may not vote on the following issues: admissions; pupil discipline; appointment of governors; budget and financial commitments.
- 2.10.7 **(Regulations 26)** All committees must be Clerked but this can be undertaken by a governor who is a member of the committee or an associate member. The Headteacher is not permitted to Clerk a committee.
- 2.10.8 7 days notice must be given for all Committee meetings and Agendas circulated.

2.11 ATTENDANCE

- 2.11.1 The following constitute attendance by members and Officers in Attendance (including the attendance of members for the purposes of quoracy):
- a. the physical presence of a member or Officer in Attendance during a meeting;
 - b. remote attendance which is defined for the purposes of these Standing Orders as participation by a member or Officer in Attendance in a meeting by teleconference call or through use of video-conferencing or other similar technologies that enable the member or Officer in Attendance to hear the meeting and to be heard by the other persons present, including any other member or Officer in Attendance who is attending remotely.
- 2.11.2 Remote attendance by members or Officers in Attendance will require the prior consent of the chair.
- 2.11.3 Prior to commencing the business of the meeting the Chairman will verify the identity of any member or Officer in Attendance whom the Chairman has agreed may attend remotely. This will be recorded in the minutes.
- 2.11.4 Where remote attendance has been approved by the Chairman any failure in the medium of attendance which prevents the member or Officer in Attendance so affected from hearing the meeting and being heard by the other persons present, including any other member who is attending remotely, for any part of the meeting, will be recorded in the minutes. Where such a failure affects the attendance of a member, this will constitute the absence of that member from the meeting for the period of this failure.

3 CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES

3.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR EACH COMMITTEE AND WORKING PARTY AUTHORISED BY THE GOVERNORS OF FEN DITTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL. THE GENERAL TERMS AND STRUCTURES ARE COMMON TO ALL COMMITTEES AND ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 3.1.1 A committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Governing Body.

- 3.1.2 The membership and terms of reference of the committee shall be decided by at least two thirds (rounded up) of the current membership of the Governing Body.
- 3.1.3 The membership of the committee may include non-governors.
- 3.1.4 The Headteacher is entitled to attend any meeting of a committee.
- 3.1.5 Other members of the Governing Body may attend any meeting of any committee but they may not vote.
- 3.1.6 Where there is a conflict between the interests of an individual member of the committee and the interests of the Governing Body, or where the principles of natural justice require fair hearing and there is any reasonable doubt about the person's ability to act impartially, s/he should withdraw from the meeting and not vote.
- 3.1.7 The chair of the committee has the casting (or second) vote.
- 3.1.8 The Governing Body may abolish a committee or withdraw its delegated powers.
- 3.1.9 The committee shall, each school year, at their first meeting, elect a chair and vice-chair. All governors are eligible for these offices except the Headteacher and any other employee of the school. If the chair is absent from a meeting a governor may be elected to take the chair.
- 3.1.10 The Standards and Resources committees will meet twice a term. Other committees will meet as and when required.
- 3.1.11 Members of the committee are entitled to seven days notice of a meeting and to receive an agenda. A shorter timescale may be given if the committee chair decides the issue needs urgent attention.
- 3.1.12 The Clerk to the Governing Body must ensure that all committee meetings are minuted and these minutes must be kept and be available for inspection. Minutes of Committees have to be approved by the full Governing Body.
- 3.1.13 The committee will report (recommendations and/or decisions) to the full Governing Body.

3.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES

- 3.2.1 There are some committees which need to be established to fulfil specific duties of the Governing Body. These are listed below:
 - a. Staff dismissal
 - b. Appeals against warnings and dismissal
 - c. Pay review committee
 - d. Pay appeals committee
 - e. Headteacher Performance Management
 - f. Grievance committee
 - g. Well-being committee
 - h. Standards committee
 - i. Resources committee
- 3.2.2 Governors serving on discipline committees should take great care to ensure that they follow proper procedures since their decisions are open to scrutiny by an independent panel.

4 STANDARDS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

4.1 MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1.1 The governing body has to decide the membership of the committee on an annual basis. A clear resolution approving the membership of the committee must appear in the minutes of the main governing body. Where the head is a governor they will be an automatic member. Alternatively if the head teacher is not a governor they have a right to attend all meetings of the Standards Committee.
- 4.1.2 The committee will elect from their number a chair at the first meeting of each academic year.
- 4.1.3 Name of Clerk: **Claire Hawkins**
The governing body must appoint a clerk to each committee who must not be the headteacher of the school. The governing body can appoint a governor to clerk this committee. It is up to the governing body if they are a member of the committee or not. The governing body can also appoint a trained paid clerk or volunteer.

4.2 QUORUM:

- 4.2.1 The quorum shall be three members of the committee. It is recommended that the quorum is the head teacher plus two members of the committee.

4.3 MEETINGS:

- 4.3.1 Meetings will be held regularly / at least once each term, as required. One week's notice of the agenda must be given by the Clerk of the committee when convening a meeting. The Clerk will be responsible for calling the meetings and producing minutes.

4.4 FUNCTION:

- 4.4.1 Decisions taken by the committee must be led by the priorities identified within the yearly School Development Plan, and Termly Operational Plan. The main function of the Standards Committee will be to advise and work with the headteacher to promote the best educational outcomes for all children at the school - subject to the following:
- a. To monitor standards, achievement and progress of children in the school
 - b. To monitor the priorities of the SDP and TOP in improving standards and children's learning
 - c. To receive evaluation on the SDP and the TOP and make suggestions for the future plans
 - d. To consider and advise the governing body on standards and other matters relating to the school's curriculum, including statutory requirements and the School's Curriculum Policy
 - e. To appoint link governors appointed to priorities from the SDP and TOP
 - f. For link governors to report on progress made on their appointed area in the SDP and TOP
 - g. To consider the KIT report from the LA and any other reports on the performance of the school
 - h. To prepare, in partnership with the Headteacher, for an OfSTED inspection
 - i. To review all curriculum and learning policies including the policy and provision for sex education, religious education and collective worship and Special Educational Needs.
 - j. To review all equality policies
 - k. To ensure the learning needs of different groups of children are met and that their outcomes are improving
 - l. To ensure that agreed procedures are in place for educational visits, including the appointment of a named co-ordinator and ensure that there is a clear charging policy for school activities.

- m. To ensure the production of the school prospectus
- n. To agree on the timing of school sessions
- o. To approve and review the home-school agreement.
- p. To monitor and review pupil attendance
- q. To review procedures for parental complaints
- r. Plan, draft, edit and oversee the production of the Governors' Annual Report to Parents (if deemed appropriate), for final approval by the full Governing Body
- s. Prepare the content of the school Prospectus, for final approval by the Governing Body
- t. Work with the Headteacher to promote the school in the community
- u. Make arrangements for the annual parents' meeting if appropriate

5 RESOURCES COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

5.1 MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1.1 The governing body has to decide the membership of the committee on an annual basis. A clear resolution approving the membership of the committee must appear in the minutes of the main governing body. Where the head is a governor they will be an automatic member. Alternatively, if the headteacher is not a governor they have a right to attend all meetings of the Resources Committee.
- 5.1.2 The committee will elect from their number a chair at the first meeting of each academic year.
- 5.1.3 Name of Clerk: **Claire Hawkins**
- 5.1.4 The governing body must appoint a clerk to each committee who must not be the headteacher of the school. The governing body can appoint a governor to clerk this committee. It is up to the governing body if they are a member of the committee or not. The governing body can also appoint a trained paid clerk or volunteer.

5.2 QUORUM:

- 5.2.1 The quorum shall be three members of the committee. It is recommended that the quorum is the headteacher plus two members of the committee.

5.3 MEETINGS:

- 5.3.1 Meetings will be held regularly / at least once each term, as required. One week's notice of the agenda must be given by the Clerk of the committee when convening a meeting. The Clerk will be responsible for calling the meetings and producing minutes.

5.4 FUNCTION:

- 5.4.1 Decisions taken by the committee must be led by priorities identified within the Single Plan, which should be costed within the Budget Plan. The main function of the Resources Committee will be to advise and work with the headteacher to seek the best use of the school's resources to promote the best educational outcomes for children - subject to the following:
- 5.4.2 Finance
 - a. In consultation with the Headteacher, to draft the first formal budget plan of the financial year to deliver the priorities in the Single Plan and termly RAP
 - b. To consider a budget position statement including virement decisions at least termly and to report significant anomalies from the anticipated position to the Governing Body

- c. To annually complete the School Financial Value Statement, for the chair to sign and submit to the Local Authority
- d. As part of the delegation for the day to day financial management of the school the head teacher will have delegated powers to authorise expenditure not in excess of £5,000 and authorise virement of an amount of money not in excess of £5000
- e. All virements of funds must be reported to the Resources Committee
- f. To ensure that the school operates within the Financial Regulations of the County Council
- g. To monitor expenditure of all voluntary funds kept on behalf of the governing body
- h. To annually review charges and remissions policies and expenses policies.
- i. To make decisions in respect of service agreements

5.4.3 Personnel

- a. To review the staffing structure in consultation with the Headteacher so it is effective in delivering the priorities in the Single Plan and termly RAP and improving the learning of all pupils
- b. To review the Salary Policy for all categories of staff and to be responsible for its administration and review
- c. To oversee the appointment procedure and safe recruitment for all staff
- d. To review all personnel policies such as Performance Management, Grievance, Induction etc
- e. To oversee the process leading to staff reductions
- f. To keep under review staff work/life balance, working conditions and well-being, including the monitoring of absence.

5.4.4 Governor responsibilities for Personnel are kept as a separate document which can be found in the governor files in the school office.

5.4.5 Buildings

- a. To advise the Governing Body on priorities, including Health and Safety, for the maintenance and development of the school's premises so they provide a good learning environment to deliver the priorities in the Single Plan and termly RAP.
- b. To ensure arrangements are in place for repairs and maintenance
- c. In consultation with the Headteacher, to oversee premises-related funding bids
- d. To oversee arrangements, including Health and Safety, for the use of school premises by outside users, subject to governing body policies
- e. To review that building development supports the school's priorities as detailed in the school's single plan and RAP operational termly plan
- f. To establish and keep under review an Accessibility plan

5.4.6 General

- a. List any tasks delegated to this Committee
- b. All meetings are minuted and circulated to the full governing body