



Standing Orders of the Governing Body

The Full Local Governing Body (LGB) shall ratify these Standing Orders on an annual basis, at their first meeting each academic year.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Articles of Association and Scheme of Delegation set out the roles and responsibilities of the LGB.

The Governing Body is responsible for -

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and ensuring its money is well spent
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils and for the performance management of staff.

The Headteacher maintains all day-to-day management responsibility of the school.

All governors are required to sign, on an annual basis, the Code of Conduct. All Governors will be expected to act only in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Composition

The composition of the Governing Body of St. Mary's School is determined by the Scheme of Delegation as follows –

Headteacher

1 staff governor

2 parent governors

4 foundation governors

4 community governors

2 co-opted governors may be appointed subject to the approval of the Directors.

Chair and Vice-Chair

The Governing Body has determined that the term of office for the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be one year. The Chair and Vice-Chair would cease to hold office in the event that they cease to be Governors.

At the Governing Body's first meeting each school year, it shall elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair from among their number to serve until a successor is appointed or until a vacancy occurs.

In advance of the elections for Chair and Vice-Chair, the Clerk to the Governing Body shall seek nominations. In the event that 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.

During the election the Clerk to the Governing Body shall act as chair. In the event of there being more than one nomination for either post, an election shall take place by a secret ballot. In the event of a secret ballot the nominated candidates shall withdraw from the vote.

In the event that the Chair is absent the Vice-Chair shall conduct the meeting. In the event that both Chair and Vice-Chair are absent a member of the Governing Body shall act as chair for that meeting.

Should the Chair of the Governing Body resign or have to relinquish his office, a successor will be appointed at the next full Governing Body meeting.

In the event that both the Chair and the Vice Chair resign from office or have to relinquish their office, the Clerk to the Governing Body will call an extraordinary Governing Body meeting.

The Directors, or the Local Governing Body, may remove the chairman or vice-chairman from office in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

Election and appointment of new governors

With the exception of the Headteacher (who shall serve ex-officio) and co-opted governors (who shall serve for two years), the term of office for any governor shall be four years. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of governor, any governor may be re-appointed or re-elected.

Governor appointments shall be made ensuring that the people serving on the Local Governing Body between them have an appropriate range of skills and experience and that due attention is given to succession planning.

The election of staff and parent governors is undertaken in accordance with the guidance established by Oxfordshire County Council and the Guide to the Law. The Clerk to the Governing Body shall manage the election process.

The Governing Body, subject to the approval of the Directors, has responsibility for the appointment of Community governors.

Foundation governors are appointed by the Directors of ODST on the recommendation of the PCC of St Mary's the Virgin.

Induction and training are seen as an integral and vital part of a Governor's role. The Governing Body shall ensure the induction of new governors by following the Induction Policy. The clerk shall issue induction information as identified in the policy, to all new governors. Governors will be expected to demonstrate that they have attended appropriate training.

Suspension of governors

A governor shall cease to hold office if:

- he is absent without the permission of the Local Governing Body from all their meetings held within a period of six months and the Governors resolve that his office be vacated, or
- he has not provided a criminal records certificate at an enhanced disclosure level under section 113B of the Police Act 1997.

A governor may be disqualified subject to the circumstances detailed in the Scheme of Delegation.

Appointment and Removal of the Clerk

The Clerk shall be appointed by the Local Governing Body for such term, at such remuneration and upon such conditions as they think fit; and any clerk so appointed may be removed by them.

The clerk must not be:

- A governor;
- An associate member;
- Headteacher of the school.

Where the clerk fails to attend a meeting of theirs governors may appoint any one of their number, or any other person, to act as clerk for the purpose of that meeting.

Urgent action and other urgent business

Emergency action should only be taken in extreme cases and should be reported to the Local Governing Body at their next meeting. 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 interests of:

- the school;
- any pupil at the school (or his parent);
- any person who works at the school.

A meeting can be called in less than seven days in an emergency and therefore 'delay' should be interpreted as anything that cannot wait until such a meeting could be called.

Where the chair has taken such action this shall be reported to the LGB at their next meeting.

Where urgent items need to be raised at a meeting that are not covered elsewhere on the agenda a governor may raise the item under Any Other Business. If the item is not urgent or is not deemed urgent by the Governing Body it shall be deferred to the agenda of the next meeting.

Governing Body meetings

The Governing Body will hold a full Local Governing Body meeting at least three times in each academic year.

Committees of the Governing Body shall meet as determined in the Terms of Reference of each committee.

Meeting dates of the Governing Body shall be set in advance for the forthcoming academic year, no later than the last meeting of the academic year.

LGB meetings shall start at a time that is acceptable to all members of the Governing Body.

Any governor shall be able to participate in meetings of the Local Governing Body by telephone or video conference provided that he has given notice of his intention to do so at least 48 hours prior to the meeting and the governors have access to the appropriate equipment.

All meetings shall be convened by the Clerk to the Governing Body. The Governing Body shall receive written notice of the meeting together with the agenda and supporting papers no later than seven clear days before the meeting. In the event that the Chair has convened an urgent meeting this regulation shall not apply.

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. The Clerk shall convene such a meeting as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Where possible, all communication and correspondence pertaining to meetings will be circulated electronically and stored on Governor Hub, keeping paperwork to a minimum.

Directors may attend any meeting of the Local Governing Body that they wish to. A Director attending a meeting of the Local Governing Body shall count towards quorum for the purposes of the meeting and shall be entitled to vote on any resolution being considered by the Local Governing Body provided that the number of Directors present does not form a majority of the total number of attendees present and voting.

The headteacher or governors may invite officers (e.g. Bursar, SENCO) of the school to attend meetings on an occasional or regular basis. All such persons are there in an advisory role and have no voting rights. The Local Governing Body can require any non-governor present at a meeting to leave at any time.

A record will be kept of all persons attending any meeting of the Local Governing Body or that of any of its committees. The record of attendance will be displayed on the school website in accordance with legislation.

The chair will ensure that meetings are run effectively, focussing on priorities, making best use of time available and encouraging all governors to express their views and participate in decision making.

Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Local Governing Body for the purposes of;

- (a) appointing a parent director
- (b) any vote on the removal of a governor
- (c) any vote on the removal of the chairman or vice chairman of the governors;

shall be two thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time governors.

The quorum for a meeting of governors at which any other matters shall be discussed shall be three or any one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the total number of governors holding office at the time of the meeting, whichever is greater.

Meetings which are inquorate or become inquorate may continue but no binding decisions will be taken.

Agenda

The agenda for LGB meetings shall be prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair of governors and Headteacher and circulated by the clerk. Any member of the Governing Body may request an item to be included on the agenda by notifying the Clerk at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

Attendance at meetings

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 meeting chair or, as a last resort, the school office.

Where a governor has offered apologies for absence governors must decide whether the apology should be accepted and this shall be shown on the minutes of the meeting.

Directors, governors, the Headteacher and the clerk are the only persons legally entitled to attend a governors' meeting unless the Governing Body has issued a specific invite.

Should it be deemed necessary, the Governing Body may request any non-governor to leave the meeting at anytime.

Meeting Minutes

The Clerk to the governors shall take minutes of all meetings. In the Clerk's absence a governor [excluding the Headteacher] may take the minutes on that occasion.

Where an item is confidential they shall form a separate minute on separate blue paper.

Signed copies of the minutes shall be kept by the clerk to the governors. Electronic copies of all paperwork relating to Governing Body meetings shall be stored by the Clerk for a period of five years, on an external hard disc drive.

The meeting minutes shall be produced within seven days and sent to the meeting chair and Headteacher for approval. Once approval has been received the minutes shall be circulated to every member of the Governing Body.

The Governing Body shall approve the minutes at the next meeting. Approved minutes (except confidential items) shall be available for public inspection in accordance with the regulations.

The approved minutes of LGB meetings will be sent to the Governor Services Administrator at Diocesan Church House and the Governor Services Officer at ODST.

Governors, whether or not they will be in attendance at Local Governing Body meetings are required to have read, prior to the meeting, all circulated papers pertaining to the meeting, including minutes of committee meetings.

All governors will be issued with a school email account which must be used for all governor e-mail communications. Governors are required to check their school e-mail account on a regular basis and at least once a week during school terms.

Correspondence

The Chair and Vice-Chair may write letters on behalf of the Governing Body. Letters should only be sent on headed school paper. Individual governors should not enter in to an email correspondence with a parent, pupil or member of staff unless they have been specifically asked to do so by the Chair or as an action arising from a meeting of the Local Governing Body.

The LGB shall be advised of any correspondence received marked for their attention.

Decision Making and Delegation of Functions

All decisions must be made by the corporate Governing Body unless the Governing Body has delegated the function to a committee.

No individual governor may take action unless that action has been formally delegated to the individual governor by the Governing Body.

Only governors present at a meeting are able to vote. Votes may be taken by email where this is agreed by Governors as an acceptable way of making a specific decision.

A simple majority decides the outcome of any vote and in the event of a tie the Chair shall have the casting vote. [This does not apply when it relates to a selection panel vote for recommendation of the appointment of Headteacher or deputy Headteacher].

Decisions of the Governing Body are binding upon all members.

Business and Pecuniary Interests

A register of pecuniary and personal 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 a Pecuniary Interest Form. New governors shall be required to sign a Pecuniary Interest Form as part of their induction process.

The declaration of interests will be a standing agenda item and governors are required to declare any business or personal interest in any agenda item.

Any person entitled to attend a full Governing Body meeting (including associate members and the Headteacher) must withdraw and not vote where there could be a conflict of interest between the individual and the Governing Body.

Committees

The Governing Body shall review its committee structure at least once every two years.

Each committee shall have terms of reference, approved annually, to which the committee must adhere.

Committee Chairs shall be appointed each year, at the start of the academic year, by agreement of the Full Governing Body.

The Headteacher has the right to attend any committee meetings.

Each committee shall be clerked by the Clerk to the Governing Body.

The Clerk will circulate minutes of each committee meeting to the full Governing Body.

Key Responsibilities

Unless otherwise specifically delegated all matters delegated to the LGB and listed within the Scheme of Delegation shall be the direct responsibility of the Full Local Governing Body. The LGB shall be responsible for the following matters, which are not delegated to sub-committees or individuals.

Core Functions

- Setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction within the values of the Trust
- Overseeing the educational performance of the school
- Interrogate evidence from staff and committees in order to inform the school improvement cycle and strategic planning
- Ensure that any actions from reports e.g. OFSTED, are addressed and are incorporated within the school improvement plan and delegated to appropriate committees
- Ensure the governors' work over the school year is coordinated with the school improvement cycle
- Review the strategic direction and development priorities of the school, so that improvement planning builds on strengths and addresses any areas of weakness
- Ensure that consultation with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community is systematic taken into account when determining development priorities

Finance

- Overseeing and monitoring the budget and levels of expenditure at least twice a year
- Approving the annual draft budget submission, prior to submission to the Trust

Staffing and Appraisal

- Receiving an annual summary statement from the pay committee
- Appointing the Headteacher
- Appointing the Deputy Headteacher
- Suspending/ending the suspension of the Headteacher
- Dismissing staff
- Headteacher appraisal (delegated to a committee for action)

Premises, Health and Safety, Safeguarding

- Developing and establishing safeguarding procedures
- Approving the Annual Safeguarding Report
- Approving the safeguarding policy annually
- Agreeing school strategic premises plans
- Reviewing and agreeing annual equality objectives
- Approving an Annual Children Looked After report (where necessary)

Curriculum and standards

- Agreeing a monitoring timetable and governor involvement
- Receiving a mid-year progress report on the School Improvement Plan
- Developing and monitoring a School self-evaluation process and document
- Agreeing and publishing annual equality objectives

Governance and Policies

- Arranging the appointment and induction of new governors
- Removing the Chair and Vice-Chair from office
- Appointing and removing the clerk to the governors
- Ensuring statutory committees are in place and reviewing their work and efficacy
- Ensuring the Register of Interests is in place and updated annually
- Agreeing delegation of roles/tasks to sub-committees or working parties
- Evaluating the quality of governance
- Determining training and development needs for governors
- Ensuring succession planning is in place for governors
- Receiving a report on admissions at each LGB meeting