

THE BISHOP WILLIAM WARD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

GOVERNING BODY STANDING ORDERS – January 2025

These Standing Orders are established in accordance with the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 and Governance Guide - March 2024.

1. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

1.1 The term of office for the Chair and Vice-Chair will last for one year.

1.2 The Governing Body (GB) 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 members (excluding any employee of 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. A further meeting date must be set for election of Chair. *(Note: The business of the meeting can be completed whilst chaired by the previous Chair or a Governor appointed as chair for the purpose of that meeting only.)*

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, the 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 an Extraordinary GB meeting within 14 days to elect their successors.

1.12 The Chair and/or Vice-Chair can be removed from office by resolution of the Governing Body (Regulation 9), 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 four times per academic year (twice in the autumn term, once in the spring term, once in the summer term. In addition Committees for Curriculum & Pupil-Related Matters and Resources matters will each meet once each term.

2.2 Statutory Committees will meet at a frequency determined by the Governing Body (see the related Committee Terms of Reference).

2.3 The Governing Body will set the dates for its meetings, including those of any Committee or Working Group, for the next school year at the first GB meeting in the autumn term.

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 2 hours.

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 Governors may only participate or vote at meetings which they attend in person ie proxy voting is not permitted.

3.4 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 will be called as soon as practicable to complete the unfinished business.

4. ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS (eg resulting from pandemic)

4.1 The Governing Body approves alternative arrangements for Governors to participate or vote at meetings. These arrangements may include the use of remote online platforms such as TEAMS or ZOOM and may also include a hybrid approach to meetings (ie some Governors attending virtually whilst others attend in person). There may also be a blended approach such as a mixture of some virtual meetings and some physical meetings during the academic year.

4.2 A meeting will only take place if there is a quorate number of Governors present for the meeting either at the stated venue of the meeting or virtually. If Governors are present virtually rather than in attendance in person at the venue, due regard will be paid to confidentiality as well as fair and equal contribution to the meeting.

4.3 The Clerk will physically or virtually attend the meeting in order to record the minutes.

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 will be discontinued or may continue but with no legal decisions being made.

6. CLERKING

6.1 The Governing Body will determine the arrangements for appointing a Clerk for meetings of the Governing Body and all committees.

6.2 Governors cannot act as Clerk to the Governing Body except if the Clerk is not present at the meeting, when a Governor can be appointed to take a record of the meeting.

6.3 The Headteacher cannot act as Clerk to the Governing Body or to a Committee.

6.4 The Governing Body can remove their Clerk from office by resolution at a Governing Body meeting.

7. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

7.1 The Governing Body can appoint Associate Members to serve on one or more 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 do not count towards a quorum for any meeting of the 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 he/she 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, with the Committee Chair and Headteacher.

11.2 Any Governor may place an item on the agenda by writing to the Clerk 7-10 days ahead of the meeting.

11.3 Papers that inform agenda items will be sent to Governors, ideally at the same time as the agenda.

12. LATE ITEMS/ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 The agenda will include an item for 'Any Other Business' and any Governor wishing to raise an urgent meeting item must advise the Chair before the start of the meeting.

12.2 The Governing Body will decide whether such items may be dealt with at the meeting or deferred.

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. The Governing Body may remove a Governor from the GB under the circumstances set out in Regulations 20-2A and 25 of The School Governance (Constitution and Federations)(England) Regulations 2016 (as amended 2017).

13.2 The Governing Body will adopt a procedure for dealing with complaints against Governors. 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 4 of the Constitution Regulations.
- The Governor has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the school's ethos and has brought or is likely to bring the school or the Governing Body or his/her 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 A Governor can only be removed if one or more of the following grounds apply:

- The Governor's actions have had a large negative impact on the school's or the Governing Body's ability to operate.
- The Governor has committed gross misconduct.
- The Governor has acted in a way that undermines the 7 principles of public life or British values.
- There have been repeated grounds for suspension.
- The Governor has not attended a meeting without accepted apologies for 6 consecutive months (see 15.2)

13.4 Any motion to suspend or remove a Governor must be specified as an agenda item of the meeting for which at least seven days' notice must be given.

13.5 The Governor subject to the suspension or removal must then be given the opportunity to make a statement in response.

13.6 A resolution to remove a Governor must not be enacted until it has been confirmed at a second meeting of the Governing Body held not less than 14 days after the first meeting. The removal of the Governor must be specified as an item on the agenda for the second meeting; at the second meeting the removal will need to be confirmed by a vote of the Governors.

13.7 A Governor who is suspended will continue to receive notice of meetings, agendas, reports, papers and minutes for any meetings during their suspension. This includes confidential minutes of meetings.

13.8 The Governing Body will be expected to provide an appeals procedure to enable any removed Governor to test the reasonableness of the GB's decision to remove them. *(It is advised that an independent panel will conduct the appeal process ie this panel could include a Governor from another school, and/or a suitable official from the Local Authority. It is important that an appeal mechanism is in place as the individual in question is entitled to natural justice and so should be provided a fair chance to make representations to defend themselves before the panel.)*

13.9 Where the Governing Body resolves to remove a Governor (by a majority vote at the second meeting), he/she will cease to hold office immediately.

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 a reason, the Governing Body will decide whether or not to 'consent' to that 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). Where a Governor has not attended a GB meeting for 6 consecutive months, either having sent no apologies for absence prior to the start of the meeting OR having provided a reason for absence which Governors decide NOT to consent to, the GB will discuss and decide whether that Governor should be removed. A decision to remove a Governor will be conveyed in writing by the Clerk on behalf of the GB to that Governor.

15.3 The time of arrival and/or departure of any Governor not in attendance throughout any meeting will be recorded in the minutes.

16. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

16.1 The minutes of meetings will be kept in a binder on consecutively numbered pages, each page initialled by the person signing them as a true record.

16.2 Any dissenting views will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, if that is the wish of one or more Governors present.

16.3 Action will be taken on the basis of decisions and need not await the approval of the minutes at the next meeting.

16.4 Ideally within ten school days of the meeting the draft minutes will be sent by the Clerk to the Chair and the Headteacher, for checking.

16.5 Copies of the draft minutes, once 'approved' by the Chair and Headteacher, will be sent to all members of the Governing Body.

16.6 The agreement of the minutes of the previous meeting will be on the agenda of every meeting of the Governing Body or Committee and once agreed as a true record (subject to any amendments) the minutes will be signed and dated by the Chair.

16.7 Those matters which the Governing Body determines shall remain confidential will be minuted separately. Confidential minutes will be printed on Pink Paper and will not be made publicly available.

16.8 Approved draft minutes, and subsequently the agreed minutes, will be made available at the school, at all reasonable times, for inspection by anyone wishing to see them.

16.9 Minutes made available for inspection will include papers forming part of the meeting.

16.10 A copy of the signed minutes will be sent to the LA and/or Diocese of Chelmsford 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 that 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 any correspondence which he/she has already taken urgent action on.

19. INFORMATION AND ADVICE

19.1 The Headteacher has a statutory duty to keep the Governing Body fully informed. He/she will present a written report to the Governing Body at least on a termly basis .

19.2 Where important information required by the Governing Body is given orally, it will be recorded in the minutes in appropriate detail.

19.3 Where information required by the Governing Body is not readily available, reasonable time will be given for its production.

19.4 Where expertise is needed but not available within the Governing Body, the GB 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 a Working Group 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 or video conferencing is only permitted if 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 which, if any, candidate to recommend to the Governing Body for appointment as Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

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.

21.7 There is no provision under the current legislation to make decisions via email. Every effort should be made to organise virtual meetings as the use of email is considered to be correspondence and not the forum for approval. In times of emergency, Chair's urgent action could be used to approve decisions but any such decision must be ratified by Governors at the next available Governing Body meeting.

22. URGENT ACTION

22.1 The Chair, or in his/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 he/she is a Governor), the Clerk, 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(s) 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 Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher has been appointed as 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 can be invited to attend meetings of the Governing Body as observer/s, as part of their professional development.

24.7 The Headteacher or Governing Body may invite staff (Deputy Headteacher, School Business Manager, Head of Department etc.) to attend meetings on an occasional or regular basis. All staff 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 in a clearly laid out document. Each year all Governors will complete a full written declaration and copies of these will be kept for that year.

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 school 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, parent or 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 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 or 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 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 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 Committees and will:

- determine the membership (including non-governors where permitted and appropriate)
- appoint the Chair of each Committee annually
- 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 matters where non-governors are not prohibited from voting under the regulations
- determine arrangements for meetings (including whether these may be held virtually) and reporting back to the Governing Body
- 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

- Staff Matters (Pay, Discipline and Grievance)
- Staff Appeals (Pay, Discipline and Grievance)
- Pupil Discipline
- Pupil Admissions

28.5 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.

28.6 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.

28.7 All Committees with delegated powers will keep formal minutes, and copies will be presented to the next meeting of the Governing Body.

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 membership, including non-governors, and the method of appointing the Chair
- allow Working Groups to determine their own timetables within given limits
- determine procedures for reporting back

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 Each Working Group will present a written report, including recommendations where appropriate, to the next meeting of the Governing Body.

30. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

30.1 All Governors are required to hold an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check certificate.

30.2 Where a Governor is elected or appointed and does not currently hold a DBS certificate, the Governing Body will apply for such a certificate in respect of that Governor within 21 days after his/her appointment or election.

30.3 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 bound by the Governor Code of Conduct adopted by the Governing Body and reviewed annually. New Governors will receive a copy of the Code upon first appointment/election.

Signed:.....

Date:.....