

Governing Body Terms of Reference

Role of the Governing Body

The main aim of the Governing Body (GB) is to maintain and improve Paradise Primary School's (including the Early Years) standard of education.

The work can be divided into the following key roles:

- Setting the school's vision and strategic aims, agreeing plans and policies, and making creative use of resources;
- Monitoring and evaluating performance, acting as a critical friend to the Headteacher and the Senior Management Team and to support and challenge them in managing the school;
- To oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent;
- Ensuring that the school is accountable to the children and parents it serves, to its local community, as well as to the staff it employs.

There are also a number of key duties the GB carries out which are set out below:

- Setting and monitoring the school's aims and policies.
- Setting academic targets, staff performance targets and whole school targets;
- Review and monitor examination/national test results;
- Monitor attendance of pupils / staff/ governors;
- Reviewing, adopting and monitoring the School Improvement Plan (including for Early Years);
- Reviewing, adopting and monitoring the SEF (including for Early Years);
- Determining how the school's budget is spent;
- Hearing escalated appeals and grievances;
- Setting standards for pupils' behaviour and discipline in consultation with the headteacher;
- Working in partnership with the Schools Operation Manager making sure school buildings are welcoming and safe;
- Annually elect governors for the following responsibilities:-
 - Literacy;
 - Numeracy;
 - Equality;
 - SEN;
 - Safeguarding;
 - Health and Safety

Please note: Reference to Paradise Primary School in this policy also includes Early Years.

Appointment of Governing Body members

The role of a Governor at Paradise Primary School is very demanding and requires time and commitment as well as the ability to work together with people of different backgrounds towards a shared goal. Therefore, before submitting an application for a vacant position, a candidate must be prepared to commit to the requirements of being a GB member at Paradise Primary School.

- Any parent or member of the community can apply to sit on the GB by submitting an application form. An application form can be requested by sending an email to info@paradiseschool.org.uk;
- The GB will review the application and look at the strengths of the candidate, what required skills he / she can bring;
- A key consideration in the appointment and election of all new governors shall be the skills and experience the governing body needs to be effective;
- If appropriate, the GB may decide to interview the candidate or alternatively they may decline the application;
- Members of the GB can also nominate individuals to join the group and this will be subject to a vote before a formal approach is made to invite them to apply;
- Any vote on the appointment of a new GB member shall be two thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time governors excluding the Chair.

Please note the following:

- Registered pupils cannot be governors;
- A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of election or appointment;
- A person cannot hold more than one governor post at the same time.

Appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair

The process for the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair is set out below:

- The Chair and the Vice Chair will be elected by members of the GB every two years or earlier where appropriate;
- If the election of the Chair or Vice Chair is contested then there will be a secret ballot to decide the appointments. Those who have expressed a desire to assume either of the roles will not be eligible to vote;
- They will be elected from within the GB;
- When an election is to be held, the GB will elect an interim chair (who has not declared an interest in becoming Chair or Vice Chair) and he/she will consult with the rest of the GB on the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair;
- Once elected, all GB meetings will be chaired by the Chair and in his / her absence the Vice Chair will assume the role;

- If in the event that the Chair and / or Vice Chair have to relinquish their roles either through resignation or for any other reason then a successor will be appointed at the next meeting;
- In the event of the Chair relinquishing his /her role the Vice Chair will chair the meeting until a successor is elected;
- In the event of the Vice Chair relinquishing his /her role the Chair will continue to chair the meeting;
- In the event of both the Chair and Vice Chair relinquishing their role at the same time, an interim Chair will be chosen who will chair the meeting until successor(s) are identified at a special meeting which will be held within five days of the resignations;
- The Chair and / or the Vice Chair can be removed through a special resolution of the GB;
- The governor(s) proposing removal of the Chair and / or Vice Chair must state his / her reason at a special meeting and an opportunity to respond must be afforded to the Chair and / or Vice Chair. The decision to remove the Chair and / or Vice Chair will be taken by the rest of the GB;
- Any vote on the removal of the Chair and / or Vice Chair shall be two thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time governors excluding the Chair
- Any complaints / allegations against either the Chair and / or Vice Chair will be investigated by an elected GB member.

Clerk to the Governors

To support the efficient functioning of the GB, a Clerk is appointed whose responsibilities will include:

- Prepare agenda;
- Record minutes and distribute them to all GB members and senior members of staff;
- Maintain the action log;
- Oversee the election of the Chair and Vice Chair.

In the event that the Clerk is absent at a meeting, the role will be undertaken by one of the GB.

Quorum

The quorum for all business of the governing body is 3 governors or one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the total number of governors holding office on the date of the meeting, whichever is the greater.

In the event that a decision is required immediately, for example a delay in dealing with the matter would be seriously detrimental to the interest of the school, child, his /her parents / guardians or member of staff, and it is not possible to convene a meeting or consult with other members then the Chair can take a decision without the need for quorum.

However, the GB must be informed as soon as practicable and have the opportunity to question / seek clarity should they require.

If a meeting becomes inquorate or discontinued for any reason, any items remaining will be placed on the agenda of a subsequent meeting.

Timing and duration of meetings

Normally the GB, as a minimum, will meet fortnightly on a Sunday at 8pm. The meetings will be held at the School unless otherwise specified and will usually be no more than two hours in duration.

All proposed agenda items must be submitted to the Clerk no later than 6pm the day before the meeting. Late items can only be added at the discretion of the Chair, alternatively he / she may decide to add to the forward agenda.

Where matters on the agenda cannot be discussed within the allocated time then the meeting may continue in order to deal with the business or be deferred till the next meeting. However, in the event that the matter is of an urgent nature then a further meeting will be scheduled as soon as practicable ensuring there is quorum.

Minutes of meetings

Minutes from meetings will only be shared with GB members and the Headteacher unless other parties are deemed by the GB to require access.

Suspension of Governors

The GB may by a special resolution suspend a governor for all or any meetings of the governing body, or of a committee, for a fixed period of up to six months on one or more of the following grounds:

- Being a person paid to work at the school, is the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to his / her employment;
- Subject of proceedings in any court or tribunal, the outcome of which may be that he / she may be considered, acting reasonably, to be not suitable to hold office as a governor;
- Is in breach of any of the provisions of this code of practice which the governing body believes has, or could, bring the office of school governor into disrepute;
- Has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos or with the religious character of the school and has brought or is likely to bring the school or the governing body or his office into disrepute;
- Is in breach of his / her duty of confidentiality to the school or to any member of staff or to any pupil at the school.

A resolution to suspend a governor from office shall not have effect unless the matter is specified as an item of business on the agenda for the meeting of which notice has been given.

Before a vote is taken on a resolution to suspend a governor, the governor proposing the resolution shall at the meeting state his reasons for doing so. The governor who is the subject of the resolution shall then be given the opportunity to make a statement in response before withdrawing from the meeting.

Any vote on the removal of a GB member shall be two thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the persons who are at the time governors excluding the Chair.

Expulsion of Governors

A matter deemed so serious by the GB may result in permanent expulsion of a GB member. The process is the same as that outlined above.

Resignation of Governors

In the event that a member no longer seeks to act on the GB then he/ she can submit their resignation in writing addressed to the Chair or Vice Chair (in his / her absence). It is preferable that reasons for resigning are stated but this is not compulsory.

Governor's Expenses

All reimbursements for expenses must be agreed in advance with the GB lead for finance.

Confidentiality

All matters discussed are confidential and must not be shared with anyone other than those present. It is acknowledged that on occasions there will be a requirement to discuss specific items with member of staff or other stakeholders.

Headteacher report

At the end of each term the Headteacher will present the report to the GB. The purpose of the report is to provide an update on progress against key priorities. The GB may, at their discretion, upload a copy onto the website.

Access to meetings

Apart from GB members, the only people entitled to attend a meeting is the Headteacher, members of the SMT (by invite only), any other individual deemed necessary by the GB. The GB can require any non- governor present at a meeting to leave at any time.

Associate members

The GB recognises that there are many people with expertise and specialist knowledge within the community who can provide support on an infrequent basis. From time to time, the GB may invite them to provide support, advice and guidance.

Pecuniary and Personal Interest

The GB will create annually a register of business interest of its members which will be compiled by the Clerk and will be available at the school for inspection.

Governors will draw attention as appropriate to any pecuniary or other personal interest, whether that interest has previously been registered or not.

Anyone who is ordinarily entitled to attend governing body or committee meetings (that is governors, members of committees, associate members or Headteachers) must withdraw and not vote on the issue if:

- There could be conflict between the interest of that person and the interests of the governing body;
- Where a fair hearing must be given and there is reasonable doubt about the individual's ability to act impartially on any matter.

Committees

To work effectively and efficiently, the GB has set up a number of committees that have specific areas of responsibility. These are briefly described below:

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE - To review, adopt and monitor an overall curriculum policy

PREMISES COMMITTEE - To provide support and guidance for the Governing Body and the Headteacher on all matters relating to the maintenance and development of the premises and grounds, including Health and Safety

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - In consultation with the Headteacher, to determine the staffing structure of the school

SAFEGUARDING, CHILD PROTECTION AND BEHAVIOUR COMMITTEE - To review, adopt and monitor the School's safeguarding and child protection policy ensuring it complies with statutory requirements, is easily accessible and is understood by staff and volunteers

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE - To review, adopt and monitor a Finance Policy which includes the local scheme of delegation for spending and budgetary adjustments for the committee, Headteacher and other nominated staff.

If you would like further information, please contact the school.