2025

Governing Board Virtual Meeting Attendance Policy

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Introduction

As a Church of England Primary school we are committed to enabling all stakeholders to support our children to be the best that they can be so that they can live *life in all its fullness* (John10:10)

Our approach to ensuring that all Governors can play a full and productive part in the leadership of the school, is to enable the use of technology to support those who cannot always be physically present at meetings

1. Aims

The aims of this virtual meetings policy are to:

- Enable the Governing Board to continue its work and maintain strategic oversight where face-to-face meetings are not possible
- Provide a framework in which to run meetings virtually and include those attending virtually
- Provide flexibility so Governors can attend meetings virtually where they would otherwise have had to miss them

2. Alternative Arrangements for meetings

The School Governance (England) (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 make provision for Governing Boards of maintained schools in England to: "approve alternative arrangements for Governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including but not limited to by telephone or video conference".

The Governing Board of St Peter's and Clifton Church of England VC Primary School has determined the following arrangements will apply.

3. Meetings

The three statutory full Governing Board meetings and termly scheduled committee meetings will be held as face-to-face meetings. If the meetings are not quorate then an alternative date will be sought. If this is not possible, arrangements may be made to link governors to face to face meetings via TEAMs/or Zoom.

TEAMs /Zoom meetings (virtual meetings) may be arranged in exceptional circumstances.

Where necessary extraordinary Governing Board and committee meetings including those committee meetings related to the policies of the school such as HR and Complaints can be held virtually subject to the agreement of all parties.

Exclusions must be held face-to-face unless there are exceptional circumstances or if the parent has made a request for a virtual meeting.

The Governing Board reserves the right to move a scheduled face-to-face meeting to virtual should this be necessary and provided all Governors attending the meeting are informed in advance.

Where a meeting is taking place virtually every effort will be made to enable all Governors to access the meeting.

4. Virtual Meetings

4.1 Recording the Meeting

Virtual meetings should not be recorded in any way without the approval of the Governing Board. If it is necessary that the meeting is to be recorded, advice must be sought in advance, in relation to GDPR.

Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the Governance Professional or a Governor (other than the Headteacher) and these minutes will be presented to the next meeting of the full Governing Board for ratification.

Minutes will be signed by the Chair using an electronic signature or via Governor hub/ minutes being printed and signed manually.

Signed minutes of the full Governing Board must be retained by the Governance Professional.

4.2 Quorum

All Governors count towards the quorum.

If an individual Governor loses connection to the meeting, they will no longer count towards the quorum. The meeting can continue undisrupted if it remains quorate.

If the meeting becomes inquorate then discussions may continue, but no votes can be held unless the meeting is quorate.

If all Governors lose connection to the meeting, then the Governance Professional will postpone the meeting and reschedule.

4.3 Declarations of Interest

Where a Governor declares an interest, they will withdraw from the meeting by leaving the call.

Once the Governing Body is ready for the Governor to re-join, the Governance Professional will notify them via email.

4.4 Voting

Governors will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to.

Secret ballots will be allowed where possible.
Governors attending virtual meetings can share their vote privately with the Chair/Governance Professional eg via email or in a private phone call.

5 Virtual Attendance at Face-to-Face Meetings

If a Governor is unable to physically attend a meeting and wishes to participate by either telephone or video link (virtually) the Chair and Governance Professional must be notified at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting, with reasons for the request, to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made A Governor attending virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost, they will cease to contribute to the quorum but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.

Where a Governor declares an interest, they will withdraw from the meeting by leaving the call. Once the Governing Board are ready for the Governor to re-join, the Governance Professional will notify them.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Chair

Will chair virtual meetings, and meetings in which some participants are attending virtually, in the same way as face-to face meetings. The Chair will ensure Governors:

- Are set up on TEAMs/or Zoom
- Have tested their connection and access to the platform
- Are aware of the expectations on their attendance

6.2 Governance Professional

The Governance Professional will give written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda at least 7 clear days in advance to:

- Governors
- Headteacher
- Associate Members
- The Local Authority (LA) where an agenda item involves a change of school category

Where there are matters demanding urgent consideration, written notice and a copy of the agenda can be given within a shorter period as the Chair directs.

The Governance Professional will minute virtual meetings and meetings in which some participants are attending virtually, in the same way as face-to-face meetings.

The Governance Professional will ensure the minutes reflect that the meeting is virtual, or if a Governor is attending virtually.

The Governance Professional will minute all decisions, and whether any items of business need to be ratified at a later date, for example due to loss of connection.

6.3 Governors / Those Present

To ensure confidentiality and the smooth running of the meeting, Governors attending virtually will:

- Attend the whole meeting
- Attend with the webcam/video switched on where possible
- Focus on the business of the meeting in the same way as if they were attending in person
- Remain on mute unless they are speaking
- Prevent unauthorised individuals overhearing conversations (for example, by using headphones)
- Be mindful of their surroundings –consider the privacy of the room, including, but not limited to, who or what is visible or audible in the background
- Ask questions during the meeting by e.g. adding to the video conferencing platform's messaging board, or waiting until the Chair invites questions at the end of each agenda item

7 Review of this Policy

- The policy will be reviewed at least every two years, but any Governor with concerns regarding its operation can request that it is reviewed at any time