

## Ashlyns School Board of Governors Standing Orders 20/2021

### 1. Chair and Vice-Chair

1.1 Ashlyns Board's term of office for its Chair and Vice-Chair is one year. The Chair or Vice Chair will cease to hold office if they cease to be a governor of the school before the first meeting of the governing body following the anniversary of their election.

1.2 When the Chair or Vice-Chair are due for election, the Board will elect both positions from among its number (though excluding any employee of or a student at the school).

1.3 The position of Chair or Vice-Chair is deemed to be a role that can be shared.

1.4 The election process is the same for both roles:

I. Nominations to be received by the Clerk no later than 24 hrs prior to the first Board meeting in the Autumn Term. Nominations must be seconded and received in writing,

II. The clerk will take the chair during the Chair's election.

III. The nominated person will leave the meeting during the election process

IV. If the election is contested it will be decided by secret ballot with the governors standing for election withdrawing from the meeting.

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.

1.6 The Chair will conduct all meetings of the governing body, in his/her absence; the Vice-Chair will take the chair.

1.7 If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, the Board will elect a Chair for that meeting.

1.8 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 Board. The election of Chair will be a specific item of business on the agenda for the meeting.

1.9 If the Vice-Chair resigns, or has to relinquish the office for any reason, a successor will be appointed at the next meeting of the Board.

1.10 If both the Chair and Vice-Chair resign, or have to relinquish their offices for any reason, the Board will hold a special meeting within 7 days to elect their successors.

1.11 The Chair can be removed from office by the governors following procedures set out in Regulation 7 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

1.12 If the role of Chair/Vice-Chair is shared the Board will approve the working practice.

## 2. Calendar of Meetings

2.1 The Board will meet five times a year

2.2 The Board will determine a schedule of meetings and topics at the final meeting of the academic year to ensure sufficient meetings are in place to cover all monitoring and statutory expectations.

2.3 The Board will set the dates of their meetings for the next school year at the final meeting of the current year.

## 3. Timing and Duration of Meetings

3.1 Meetings will be scheduled at a time which is mutually agreeable to governors and will be limited to a maximum of 150 minutes duration.

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 urgent outstanding business notified on the agenda or via electronic debate if governors agree this is acceptable.

3.3 A meeting may be discontinued at any time if the Board so resolves. If so, or if the meeting has to be abandoned because it is no longer quorate, a further meeting shall be called as soon as practicable to complete the unfinished business.

#### 4. Quorum

4.1 The quorum for all business of the Board is one half of the total number of governors in post.

4.2 Meetings which become inquorate will be discontinued.

#### 5. Withdrawal from meetings

5.1 Governors will be required to withdraw from a meeting under circumstances set out in Regulation 14 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

5.2 If there is a dispute about a person attending a Board meeting being required to withdraw, the matter of withdrawal shall be determined by the Board.

#### 6. Convening meetings

6.1 All meetings will be convened by the clerk, in accordance with the arrangements made by the Board, but subject to (a) any direction from the Chair where a matter is urgent and (b) any requisition signed by three governors.

#### 7. Notice of Meetings

7.1 Written notice of meetings, together with the agenda, will be shared so as to arrive seven days prior to the meeting – except where the Chair calls an urgent meeting at short notice.

7.2 Notice and paperwork for meetings will be held in the relevant team drive. Notification will be sent to governors. Access to Google Drive will be removed when a governor resigns and school issued devices returned to IT Support.

7.3 Non-receipt of notice of a meeting will not invalidate the meeting.

7.4 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.

## 8. Agenda

8.1 The agenda will be prepared by the clerk in consultation with the Chair and the Headteacher.

8.2 Any governor may request an item be placed on the agenda by writing to the clerk.

8.3 Papers or information relating to agenda items can be accessed by governors on their school issued devices via Google Drive.

8.4 Agendas and documentation will be prepared by the Chair in consultation with the Head for FGB.

## 9. Late Items/Any Other Business

9.1 The agenda will include 'Notification of AOB' immediately after 'Apologies for Absence' and any governor wishing to raise an item must give notice at this time.

9.2 The Board will decide whether any such item is to be discussed or, if appropriate, deferred to a subsequent meeting.

## 10. Suspension of Governors

10.1 The Board will suspend a governor for a period of up to six months under circumstances set out in Regulation 15 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

## 11. Governors' Expenses

11.1 The Board will prepare a policy on the payment of expenses of governors in accordance with regulations.

## 12. Attendance

12.1 The clerk will keep a record of those governors and all other persons present at meetings of the Board/Committees.

12.2 Where a governor sends an apology for absence with a reason, the Board will decide whether to 'consent' to the absence and the clerk will record the decision in the minutes.

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

## 13. Minutes of Meetings

13.1 Minutes of Board meetings will be kept at school, signed as a true record by the Chair of the meeting.

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

13.3 Within 10 school days of the meeting, the draft minutes will be sent by the clerk to the Chair and HT for checking.

13.4 Copies of the draft minutes, once 'approved' by the Chair, will be shared with all members of the Board usually within fourteen school days and no longer than 30 school days of the meeting.

13.5 The approval of the minutes of the previous meeting will be on the agenda of every meeting of the Board and once approved as a true record (subject to any agreed amendments) the minutes will be signed and dated by the Chair.

13.6 Matters which the Board determines confidential will be marked accordingly as part 2 and will not be made publicly available.

13.7 Approved draft minutes, and subsequently the approved minutes, will be made available at the school, at all reasonable times, for inspection by anyone wishing to see them (excluding part 2 minutes).

13.8 A copy of the signed minutes will be sent to the LA if requested.

#### 14. Confidentiality of Proceedings

14.1 Discussions, proceedings and voting at meetings of the Board will be treated as confidential and not revealed to anyone other than a governor.

#### 15. Correspondence

15.1 All incoming correspondence to the Board, other than any concerning a complaint, is for the attention of the whole Board, even if addressed to a Chair and/or a clerk. Significant items will be presented at the next Board meeting for action or information as appropriate. The Chair will report upon any correspondence on which he/she has already taken urgent action.

15.2 The Board will determine by resolution who may write letters on behalf of the Board, either generally or on specific issues.

15.3 Correspondence with members of school staff, including emails, is to be copied to the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors.

## 16. Governor Visits

16.1 Governors must inform the Head and Chair of Governors of any visits to the school in advance.

16.2 Reports of visits/meetings should be given at FGB meeting, with the Clerk recording details on the visits form.

## 17. Information and Advice

17.1 The Headteacher has a statutory duty to keep the Board fully informed; a written report will be presented once a term.

17.2 A representative of the LA will be invited to attend meetings in order to inform and advise the governing body when considered appropriate.

17.3 At the autumn term meeting each year the governors will receive details of public examination results taken in the preceding summer term and compare these with the targets set and the previous years results.

17.4 Where information required by the Board is given orally, it will be recorded in the minutes in appropriate detail.

17.5 Where information required by the governing body is not readily available, reasonable time will be given for its production.

17.6 Where expertise is required, but not available within the governing body, the governing body may consider inviting appropriate non-governors to attend meetings or appointing associate members.

## 18. Discussion and Debate

18.1 The Chair will ensure that all governors enjoy equality of opportunity to express their views.

18.2 The Board will receive and note, without debate, any decisions on matters, which it has authorised delegated authority for a function to a committee, working party or to an individual. Decisions will be recorded in the minutes.

18.3 Recommendations received from working groups will be recorded in the minutes, together with any related Board resolution.

## 19. Decision-making

19.1 Members of the Board recognise that all decisions must be made by the Board, unless the Board has delegated the function to a committee, working party or to an individual.

19.2 Only governors present at a meeting may vote; proxy voting is not allowed.

19.3 A simple majority decides any matter put to the vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair has a casting or second vote – except in the case of a selection panel deciding which, if any, candidate to recommend to the Board for appointment as Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

19.4 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 a show of hands, unless one or more governors request a secret ballot.

19.5 Decisions of the Board are binding upon all its members.

19.6 Decisions of the Board (or of any of its committees) may be amended or rescinded at a subsequent meeting of the Board if updated information is presented to the Board.

## 20. Urgent Action

20.1 The Chair, or in his / her absence the Vice-Chair, has authority to take urgent action

between meetings only where:

I. a delay in dealing with the matter would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the school, a student, his/her parents, or a member of staff;

II. a meeting could not be called in sufficient time to deal with the matter;

III. the matter is one which can be delegated to an individual under government regulations.

20.2 If the Chair (or Vice-Chair) takes any urgent action between meetings, the facts will be reported to the next meeting of the Board.

20.3 The Chair will endeavour to seek governors' opinions via email or Google Drive when time permits regarding urgent decisions between meetings.

## 21. Public Statements

21.1 Public statements on behalf of the Board will be made only by those delegated to make them.

## 22. Access to meetings of the Board of Governors

22.1 Apart from governors, the only people entitled to attend a meeting of the Board are the clerk, associate members or invited guests/experts relating to specific items.

22.2 The Deputy Headteacher/s will be invited to attend meetings of the Board as observer/observers, as part of their professional development.

22.3 Associate members, Deputy Headteacher/s or invited persons may be required to leave a meeting where matters of a confidential nature are discussed.

22.4 When the Headteacher is absent, a Deputy Headteacher will attend in his/her place but will have no vote (unless in the long-term absence of the Headteacher, a Deputy has been appointed acting Headteacher).

22.5 The Board will decide who, other than those entitled to attend, may be admitted to a meeting and which of its meetings, if any will be open to parents/the public.

22.6 If a meeting is to be opened to parents/the public, reasonable notice will be given.

### 23. Pecuniary and Personal Interest

23.1 The Board will maintain a register of the pecuniary interests of its members in the form of individual forms that are statements completed and signed by the relevant governor.

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

23.3 Anyone who is ordinarily entitled to attend Board 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 interests of that person and the interests of the Board ;

or

- where a fair hearing must be given and there is reasonable doubt about the individual's ability to act impartially on any matter.

23.4 When a committee is considering:

- disciplinary action against an employee or against a student;

Or

- a matter arising from an alleged incident involving a student,

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.

## 24. Complaints and Staff Discipline

24.1 The Board will establish procedures for dealing with general complaints and will abide by the LA's complaint arrangements.

24.2 The Board will establish procedures for dealing with staff disciplinary matters and staff grievances.

## 25. Delegation of Functions

25.1 No action may be taken by an individual governor (including the Chair and Vice-Chair except where acting in accordance with 19.1 above) unless authority to do so has been delegated formally by resolution of the Board.

25.2 Where required under the school government regulations, and in other cases in order to ensure the most efficient conduct of its business, the Board will:

- delegate work to committees, working party or individual members of the Board and/or the Headteacher.
- set up working groups to provide information and/or make recommendations to the Board.

25.3 The arrangements for delegating functions will be reviewed annually by the Board.

25.4 In delegating functions to individuals, the Board will have regard to the restrictions set out in Regulation 17 of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003.

## 26. Committees

26.1 If the Board sets-up a committee to which it delegated any of its functions; the committee will act in accordance with the terms of delegation.

26.2 When establishing committees the Board will ensure compliance with the regulations concerning the constitution of the committees and will:

I. Determine the membership (including non-governors where permitted and appropriate)

II. Determine the reserve membership to cover for the absence of ordinary members

III. Allow the committee to elect its Chair

IV. Establish and record terms of reference

V. Review the membership and terms of reference at the first meeting of the Autumn Term

VI. Decide whether to confer voting rights on any or all non-governors subject to any restrictions imposed by school government regulations

VII. Allow the committees to determine their own timetables

VIII. Determine arrangements for reporting back.

IX. Review the need for, and the membership of committees annually.

26.3 The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have the right to attend/and or be a member of any committee meetings, subject to the statutory rules on withdrawal.

26.4 Associate governors cannot vote on issues relating to admissions, pupil discipline, election or appointment of governors, the budget and financial commitments of the Board of Governors.

26.5 The Board will establish trained governors for the following purposes:

- staff dismissal
- pupil exclusion

26.7 All committees and individuals with delegated powers will report in writing to the next

meeting of the Board about any decisions made or action taken.

26.8 All committees with delegated powers will keep formal minutes, and copies will be presented to the next meeting of the governing body for information.

26.9 All meetings of committees will be clerked by a person who is not the headteacher.

## 27. Working Groups

27.1 In establishing working groups the Board will:

I. Determine the membership, including non-governors, and the method of appointing the chair

II. Establish and record terms of reference

III. Allow working groups to determine their own timetables within given limits;

IV. Determine procedures for reporting back.

27.2 The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have the right to attend/and or be a member of any working group meeting.

27.3 Working groups established for specific purposes will be discontinued when their work has been completed.

27.4 All working groups will present a written report, including recommendations where appropriate, to the next meeting of the Board