

# **Governing Body Handbook**

## **for a maintained school**

**Broadwood Primary School**

**Date September 2016**

This document sets out the principles and procedures by which this governing body operates. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. (Next review – September 2017).

All governors have a copy so that they know how the governing body works.

### **School Vision Statement**

**At Broadwood we have a shared vision to create a school where children are valued, celebrated, equipped, inspired and empowered.**



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# Introduction

Broadwood Primary School is a community school.

The governing body works to support the overall development of the pupils. All governors contribute to raising standards for all pupils. This involves providing a strategic view for the school, holding the headteacher to account and ensuring financial probity.

(See Appendix 1 for a full list of governors)

Governors are involved in:

- planning the future direction of the school
- monitoring and evaluating the progress of the school against these plans
- supporting and challenging the school team
- being accountable to parents and others about the school's performance
- ensuring all statutory duties are carried out

In order to carry out this work governors:

- work closely with the school team
- have 6 full governing body meetings a year; one in each term.
- work on committees to which the governing body has delegated key areas of responsibility. These meet on a regular basis – twice each term
- visit the school
- attend training
- recognise that the headteacher is responsible for the implementation of policy, management of the school and the implementation of the curriculum
- self-evaluate their own practices on a regular basis

The individual governor has a responsibility, working alongside other members of the governing body, to the staff and pupils of the school, the school's wider community and where they are representatives, to their particular constituency (parents, staff etc).

Although some governors may represent particular constituencies (for example parents or staff) they are not delegates of that group, they are representative members.

Broadwood Primary School ask that governors do the following;

- undergo a DBS check on starting as a governor
- wear ID badges when in school
- provide information on themselves for newsletters etc
- agree to their photograph being displayed on the noticeboard

## Governing bodies do:

1. set the overall budget for the school
2. decide on the staffing structure

3. decide on the level of pay for teachers
4. help to decide the priorities for the school when the school improvement plan is being developed
5. ensure the national curriculum is taught to all pupils
6. monitor targets for pupil achievement
7. publish national test and exam results
8. compare the performance of their school to similar schools
9. receive information about the quality of teaching in the school
10. have a published strategy for dealing with parental complaints and concerns
11. ensure health and safety /risk management/safeguarding issues are addressed
12. set the times of school sessions
13. set term time and holiday dates (VA, trust schools and academies)
14. work with the headteacher when making decisions
15. ask challenging questions
16. help develop school policies and procedures
17. consider the repair and maintenance of school buildings
18. consider the use of school premises outside school hours
19. appoint committees of governors to look at specific issues such as finance, staffing, curriculum.

## **Governing bodies don't:**

1. inspect the school
2. report on the quality of teaching after visiting the school
3. share concerns about staff capability
4. decide on how pupils are taught different subjects
5. have the right to exclude a pupil
6. write the school's policies on their own
7. authorise all expenditure
8. rubberstamp recommendations from the Headteacher
9. need to be aware of the performance objectives which have been set for individual teachers

## **Chair – key tasks**

- To ensure the governing body functions effectively, giving clear leadership, direction and ensuring a focus on the core functions
- To encourage the governing body to work as an effective team and contribute fully
- To make sure, with the clerk, that the governing body's business is conducted in accordance with the law.

- Ensure that governors know and follow the rules and codes of conduct ensuring democracy.
- To make it clear that all governors must accept collective responsibility for decisions taken at governors' meetings.
- To be available to make “emergency” decisions under Chair’s Action and to report any urgent action taken on behalf of the governing body, making sure it is fully explained.
- To ensure meetings are run effectively, focusing on priorities and making the best use of time available, and to ensure that all members have an equal opportunity to participate in discussion and decision-making.
- Construct and agree the agenda for meetings, together with the clerk, taking account of the recommendations of the headteacher and requests from other governors and keep good order in meetings.
- To approve draft minutes for publication taking account of confidential items.
- To use time effectively by planning the year’s cycle of meetings and a timetable for action.
- Ensure governors' participation in and between meetings.
- Help new governors become involved in the work of the governing body.
- Ensure all decisions are understood and that necessary action is taken.
- Ensure governors receive all relevant information and materials.
- Check that decisions taken by the governing body are enacted.
- Be proactive with regard to recruitment and retention on the governing body.
- Ensure succession planning within the governing body.
- Help the governing body understand its own strengths and weaknesses.
- To establish and foster an effective relationship with the headteacher based on trust and mutual respect for each other’s roles.
- To ensure that the governing body acts as a sounding board to the headteacher and provides strategic direction.
- Listen and be a critical friend to the headteacher.
- To carry out any duties delegated by the governing body, be seen in school regularly, attend school functions or make sure another governor represents them, work with the LA, be accessible to other governors, staff and parents and meet governors from other schools.
- Report decisions of the governing body to parents, staff and others regularly.
- Co-ordinate the governing body role in OFSTED Inspections and LA reviews.
- Manage the complaints process.
- Attend LA briefings where beneficial.
- Involve the vice-chair so that he/she is in a position to act if you are not available.

## **Vice Chair – key tasks**

- To liaise on a regular basis with the chair and headteacher to ensure the vice chair is fully informed.
- To take on responsibilities delegated to them by the chair.
- To deputise for the chair in their absence.
- To establish and foster an effective relationship with the headteacher based on trust and mutual respect for each other’s roles.

- To be seen in school regularly, attend school functions or make sure another governor represents them, work with the LA, be accessible to other governors, staff and parents and meet governors from other schools.
- To use time effectively by planning the year's cycle of meetings and a timetable for action in conjunction with the chair.
- Ensure governors' participation in and between meetings.
- Listen and be a critical friend to the headteacher.
- Attend LA briefings or other LA events on chair's behalf if necessary.

## **The Headteacher is responsible for:**

- the internal organisation, management and control of the school
- formulating aims, objectives and policies for the governing body to consider adopting
- advising on and implementing the governing body strategic framework
- giving governors the information they need to help the school raise standards
- reporting to governors three times a year via a headteacher's report

# Meetings

## Attendance and apologies

Good attendance at meetings, both full governing body and committees, is important so that all governors develop a good overall understanding of school business and are involved in making corporate decisions.

All formal meetings of the governing body have to be quorate in order to make decisions. Meetings are quorate when at least 50% of the governors are present. This means at least 6 governors must attend full governing body meetings for decisions to be made. Committee meetings must also be quorate for decisions to be made (at least 3 governors).

Attendance at meetings is monitored by the Clerk to the Governing Body. If governors cannot attend a meeting then they should give your apologies to the Clerk to the GB (Governor Services Clerks , 0191 211 5319, or via the headteacher or chair). The governing body decides whether or not to accept apologies. If a governor's apologies are not accepted and the governor does not come to meetings for a period of more than six months then they will be disqualified from the governing body. (The date is calculated from the date of the first full governing body meeting missed without permission.) Where governors fail to send their apologies in advance of a meeting their apologies may not be accepted or approved after the meeting.

All governors may ask for items to be included on the agenda of the full governing body by contacting the chair and the Clerk at least two weeks before the meeting. The chair decides whether to include the item. If three governors ask for an item to be included then this must appear on the agenda.

## Committees

Broadwood Primary School has 4 committees:

- Curriculum Committee
- Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee
- Pay Review Committee
- Pupils and Discipline Committee

See Appendix 2 for full details.

## **Year Planner for full governing body meetings**

Setting an effective agenda for full governing body meetings can significantly help the governing body to focus on its workload and key priorities. Governor Services provides guidance and a model agenda on a termly basis. However, governing bodies are encouraged to develop their own agendas and the guidance in Appendix 3 will help governing bodies to build appropriate agendas across the year covering all the standard, procedural, specific termly and strategic items. Further guidance can be obtained from the Clerk or Governor Services.



## Terms of reference

### Full Governing Body (at least three meetings per year)

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#### **QUORUM: 50% of current membership**

1. To determine the strategic direction and vision of the school
2. To monitor and evaluate the performance of the school receiving reports from the headteacher and to hold the headteacher to account
3. To receive reports and ratify recommendations from committees
4. To approve the annual budget and ensure financial probity
5. To consider business tabled by the Local Authority
6. To investigate financial irregularities (if the headteacher is suspected)
7. To agree selection panel for headteacher and deputy head appointment
8. To suspend or end suspension of headteacher
9. To agree the Instrument of Government and any amendments thereafter
10. To elect (or remove) the chair and vice chair
11. To appoint or dismiss the clerk to the governors
12. To appoint and remove community/co-opted governors
13. To set up a Register of Pecuniary Interests
14. To consider whether or not to exercise delegation of functions to committees
15. To review and adopt the Governing Body Delegation Planner
16. To determine the Governing Body procedures (where not set out in law)
17. To review at least once a year the establishment, terms of reference and membership of committees
18. To set the times of school sessions and term/holiday dates (where applicable)
19. To consider the school's Self Evaluation assessments
20. To adopt the Local Authority Financial Regulations
21. To consider risk analysis regularly
22. To review the performance of the governing body and consider training needs
23. To ensure adequate safeguarding procedures are in place
24. To publish proposals to change the category of the school
25. To consider forming a federation or joining an existing federation
26. To consider requests from other schools to join the federation
27. To leave a federation

(The above should be in accordance with the agreed levels of decision making in the Delegation Planner)

## Curriculum Committee

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### **QUORUM: 3 members**

1. To consider and approve admissions arrangements
2. To assist in the development of the School Improvement / Development Plan
3. To monitor and review pupil and school performance (including RAISEonline)
4. To monitor targets for pupil achievement
5. To monitor and review School Improvement / Development Plan
6. To contribute to school self-evaluation
7. To consider and review policy and practice in:
  - Homework
  - Curriculum matters
  - RE and collective worship
  - Special Educational Needs
  - More Able Children
  - Sex and Relationships Education
  - Equalities and Community Cohesion
8. Receive monitoring and inspection reports from the Achievement Partner, LA, OFSTED or HMI
9. To monitor and review any action plan arising from monitoring and inspection by LA, HMI or OFSTED
10. To review SEND policy and receive report from SENCO
11. To review child protection and Safeguarding policies

## Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee

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### **QUORUM: 3 members**

1. To consider and agree the Annual Budget each financial year for formal agreement by the Governing Body
2. To establish and monitor links between the School Improvement / Development Plan and budget taking account of priorities
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of spending decisions linked to the School Improvement / Development Plan
4. To consider longer term financial planning linked to the future needs of the school
5. To ensure school meets its statutory obligations and complies with LA Financial Regulations for Schools (FRFS)
6. To monitor the budget throughout the year
7. To consider relevant contracts including Service Level Agreements (SLA)

8. To monitor the effectiveness of services provided through these SLAs and contracts
9. To monitor pupil roll and income levels
10. To review delegated spending limits annually (in line with LA FRFS)
11. To consider/approve procurement/contracts in line with delegated limits and the LA FRFS
12. To review charging and remissions policy
13. To receive information on grants and miscellaneous income
14. To consider outturn statement
15. To consider and determine response to any financial matters including consultation on changes to funding formula
16. To investigate irregularities
17. To approve and set up an expenses scheme
18. To ensure appropriate administration and audit of the School Fund
19. To oversee the submission of the SFVS annually
20. To consider and ensure best value at all times
21. To consider financial benchmarking data
22. To review Financial Procedures Manual
23. To self-evaluate the financial competencies of governors
24. To receive any health and safety reports
25. To ensure health and safety issues are met
26. To receive reports on condition of buildings and school environment
27. To agree maintenance work to be done

(See Appendix 4 for Finance and Premises Committee Responsibility Planner)

## **Personnel Committee**

### **QUORUM: 3 members**

1. To determine staff complement
2. To review staffing structure
3. To receive reports and monitor status of any staffing issues
4. To establish and review annually an Appraisal and Capability Policy
5. To review pay policy
6. To review (1) performance objectives for headteacher (HT PM Reviewers) and (2) pay for headteacher and other leaders (HT Pay Review Group )
7. To review salary scale for the Leadership team
8. To consider pay awards for all staff based on performance (the headteacher should not advise on his/her own pay)

9. To conduct agreed arrangements for recruitment and selection
10. To conduct agreed procedures for capability, discipline, grievance, attendance and welfare issues
11. To conduct dismissal procedures
12. To conduct staff dismissal procedures according to agree policy / procedures and in accordance with delegation planner.
13. To suspend staff (except headteacher)
14. To end suspension (except headteacher)
15. To consider, adopt or adapt LA advice on procedures and practice
16. To approve leave of absence for headteacher
17. To consider requests for leave of absence / early retirement / sabbaticals

## **Appeals and Complaints Committee**

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### **QUORUM: 3 members**

The membership is to be established on an ad hoc basis and not include any governors involved in the original decision and be a minimum of 3 governors.

This committee would deal with any appeals (salary reviews, staff grievances, staff dismissals, complaints).

## **Admissions Committee**

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### **QUORUM: 3 members**

1. To determine within statutory provisions and the governing body policy whether any child should be admitted to the school
2. To review admissions arrangements and to make recommendations for changes to the governing body

In voluntary aided (VA) and foundation schools, the governing body is the admission authority. Similarly, in academies, the academy trust is the admission authority.

In paragraph 2.7, the School Admissions Code explains:

... a decision to offer or refuse admission must not be made by one individual in an admission authority. Where the school is its own admission authority the whole governing body, or an admissions committee established by the governing body, must make such decisions.

## **Election and Appointment Arrangements**

The arrangements for the election of parent and staff governors are delegated to the headteacher. The governing body appoints Community/Co-opted governors and the Local Authority appoints Local Authority governors. NB – terminology and appointment arrangements may differ in some cases depending on whether or not the governing body has reconstituted under the School Governance Constitution Regulations 2012 (if so, the LA can nominate Local Authority governors for the governing body to agree)

Associate members may be appointed by the governors to bring additional expertise and experience to the governing body and its committees. All governors are responsible for the recruitment of new governors and supporting the retention of these. The aim is to ensure that the membership of the governing body is representative of the community served. Materials are available from the Local Authority's Governor Services to support these processes.

### **Appointment of the Chair**

Term of office: One year

#### **Election process:**

- Nominations to be invited at the meeting at which the elections were to be considered
- In the event of more than one nomination for either position, election by secret ballot
- In the event of a single nomination, the Governing Body will consider the nomination

### **Appointment of the Vice Chair**

Term of office: One year

#### **Election process:**

- Nominations to be invited at the meeting at which the elections were to be considered
- In the event of more than one nomination for either position, election by secret ballot
- In the event of a single nomination, the Governing Body will consider the nomination

### **Suspension of governors**

The governing body may decide to suspend a governor from all or any meetings of the governing body or its committees for a fixed period of up to six months on one or more of the following grounds:

- ☐ that the governor, being a person paid to work at the school, is the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to their employment.
- ☐ that the governor is a subject of proceedings in any court or tribunal, the outcome of which may be that they are disqualified from continuing in office as a governor (Under Section 6 of the Constitution Regulations 2007 or Section 4 of the Constitution Regulations 2012).

- ☐ that the governor has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the ethos or religious character of the school and has brought or is likely to bring the school or the governing body into disrepute.
- ☐ that the governor is in breach of their duty of confidentiality to the school or to any member of staff or pupil at the school.

If the governing body is considering this action it may wish to seek the advice of the Clerk to the Governing Body to ensure actions occur in a legal manner.

## Support for new governors

To help new governors learn about their role and quickly contribute to the work of the governing body, there will be an initial meeting with the chair and the headteacher and a mentor (a named and experienced governor) will be appointed. There will be a welcome and full introductions at the first meeting.

New governors need copies of the following:

- Governing Body Handbook
- Minutes from last full governing body meeting
- School Development Plan
- Last Ofsted report
- Any self-evaluation materials

Access to Governors' Area on school website

Broadwood Primary School encourage all new governors to take up training opportunities – especially Induction – offered by Governor Services and/or the Diocese and from Modern Governor (e-learning).

A mentor will do the following:

- Meet with the new governor before the meetings for the first year to answer questions, explain the agenda etc
- Sit with the new governor at meetings to answer questions
- Make regular contact to answer questions

(You may provide different support for new governors)

## **How governors are involved in monitoring**

Monitoring is an essential part of the role of governors in supporting the school's own self-evaluation process which help to raise standards. By being involved in monitoring, governors, working in partnership with the headteacher and teaching staff of the school, will develop a better understanding of how well the plans and policies are working in practice. They will then be able to use this information to better inform future strategic planning. The work of the governing body should also be monitored and evaluated.

### **The purpose of monitoring is to:**

- ☐ check that agreed plans are being implemented
- ☐ identify what's going well and celebrate it
- ☐ identify what is not going well and the reasons for this
- ☐ modify plans, if appropriate
- ☐ be accountable as a governing body

### **Methods of monitoring:**

#### **Information provided in the Headteacher's Report**

##### **Committee work**

Each committee will identify its remit and the areas of the School Improvement /Development Plan it has responsibility for, monitor those aspects of the school for which it is responsible and report each term or half term to the whole governing body. Each committee also needs to set up a rolling programme of policy review.

##### **School visits / Link governors**

It is expected that all governors visit the school at least once a year during the school day.

Some governors may be linked to specific priorities / to subjects / year groups or key stages / priorities from the School Development Plan.

Visits may involve meeting teachers and pupils, visiting classes, book scrutinies, learning walks or attending events (for example, assemblies, productions). All visits should be planned in consultation with the headteacher and the Visits Protocol should be followed (see Appendix 8).

##### **Notes of visit**

Notes of visit from the Achievement Partner will be shared with the full Governing Body (unless there are confidential items).

(You may have different methods of monitoring)



## **The Headteacher's report to the governing body**

Over the year, the headteacher's report will include information on the following:

- the number of pupils on roll
- attendance data
- the names and responsibilities of all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff
- information on staffing including staff absences
- information about staff training which has taken place, the impact and future needs
- the organisation and sizes of classes or year groups in the school
- the numbers and percentages of pupils taking paid and free school meals, packed lunches
- data on pupils in the school with special educational needs
- data on pupils in the school with EAL
- data on looked after pupils
- data on complaints
- data on exclusions
- information on standards and attainment including trends (for example by year, gender, Pupil Premium or non Pupil Premium, prior attainment or ethnicity)
- proposed attainment and progress targets for pupils throughout the school
- the success of cohorts of pupils in meeting targets and reasons for any shortfall/excess
- information on value added by the school
- specific targets relating to relevant groups of the pupil population (for example, Looked After Children, more able children, Pupil Premium)
- a commentary on the RAISEonline report on the school's performance
- the particular steps the school has taken to improve its management and organisation
- ways in which schools have developed the whole curriculum to reflect particular needs and circumstances and have enabled pupils to apply their skills in a wide variety of subjects
- information on any safeguarding/health and safety issues
- the strategies which schools are actively pursuing, in liaison with prior and subsequent phase schools, to improve the transfer of pupils' curriculum and performance information in order to improve standards
- the arrangements that have been made over the previous term for parental consultation and how far these have succeeded
- information on engagement with the community