



Copnor Primary School

Whole Governing Body Terms of Reference

Governing Body approval gained in September 2025	
Next review September 2026	
Policy proposed for adoption by Matt Johnson, Headteacher	
Headteacher's signature:	Chair of Committee signature:

Overview

The Governing Body will operate at all times in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, the School Governance Regulations, the Local Authorities Scheme for Financing Schools and all other relevant legislation, and will review the Terms of Reference at least annually.

The Governing Body has resolved to conduct all its business as a Whole Governing Body, and to work with four main Committees; Whole Governing Board (WGB), Resources and Finance Committee (resources), Curriculum and Standards (C&S) Headteacher's Appraisal Panel and Pay Committee.

Purpose

The Governing Body will take a strategic role, act as a critical friend to the Headteacher, be accountable for its decisions and act in the best interests of the school. They must act in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership. They must be open about and be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested persons.

Our Governing Body has 4 strategic core functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. The Governing Body will regularly review the vision and values of the Governing Body and the school and ensure that these are shared with all stakeholders.
- To hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school, its pupils and staff. This will be achieved by rigorous monitoring of the School Improvement Plan, staff performance management and pupil data.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent. The Governing Body will monitor financial data at least 6 times a year.
- Ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard.

Membership

15 Governors (2 Parent Governors, 1 LA Governor, 1 Staff Governor, 1 Headteacher and 10 Co-opted Governors).

The current membership is outlined in the Governance Membership document. A Chair and Vice Chair will be elected annually. The Governance Clerk will attend. It is optional for Associate Governors to attend the Full Governing Board meetings.

Quorum

One half of the membership of the Governing Body. The majority of Governors in attendance should be non-employees of the organisation. Associate Governors are not included in the quorum of the Governing Body.

Meetings: The Whole Governing Body will meet at least 3 times a year, spread evenly across the year. Should the Chair be unavailable to attend a Governing Body meeting, the vice chair will step up or a temporary chair will be elected for that meeting. Meeting agendas and supportive documents shall be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

Agenda, Supportive Documentation and Minutes

An agenda for each meeting will include all the tasks which the Governing Body is required to consider. The agenda and supportive documents shall be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting. The minutes of the Whole Governing Body meetings will be shared with all Governors and made available to the public.

The Governing Body will not disclose material relating to a named employed or engaged member of staff or proposed to be employed or engaged member of staff at the school, a named pupil at, or candidate for admissions to the school and any matter which by reason of its nature, the Governing Body are satisfied should remain confidential. Where confidential matters are discussed, the Governance Clerk will ensure Confidential Part 2 Minutes are produced, reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body. Confidential Part 2 Minutes will not be made available to the public.

Voting

Governors will make decisions by voting at Governing Body meetings. Only full Governors are eligible to vote. Associate Governors do not have voting rights. To vote, a voting Governor of the Governing Body must be present at the meeting, in-person or remotely using the Teams meeting video-conference connection. If a Governor has a direct or indirect interest in a matter to be decided by the Governing Body, and this could affect the way they do their duties they must tell the Governing Body and must not vote on the issue. A motion will be passed at a Governing Body meeting where a majority of voting Governors present are in favour of the motion. If there is a tied vote the Chair will have the deciding vote.

Emergency Power (Chair's Action)

The Chair of the Governing Body has the ability to make decisions and act on behalf of the Governing Body's behalf where it is not possible for the Governing Body to meet (either in-person or virtually). Chair's Action will only be used for urgent decisions when the Chair believes that not acting will be seriously detrimental to:

- The school, or
- Any pupil or their parent, or
- A staff member.

Chair's Action can be used for any function of the Governing Body which can be delegated to an individual (as per the regulations for maintained schools).

Chair's Action cannot be used for:

- Discontinue the school
- Approve the budget
- Suspend governors

For more details, refer to Regulation 19 of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-governance-regulations-2013>

Prior to making a decision under 'Chair's Action', the Chair of Governing Body will act in consultation with the Headteacher. If the Chair of Governing Body is absent, the Vice Chair will have the power to make decisions under 'Chair's Action'.

The Clerk will notify the Governing Body, as soon as feasibly possible, of any Chair's Action that has taken place. A record of such Chair's Action will be recorded in the minutes of the next Governing Body meeting.

Policies and Compliance

The Governing Body will ensure the school has in place all DfE statutory policies and to keep these under regular review, consulting with representative stakeholders as appropriate. The DfE recommends that all statutory policies are reviewed annually. All in-school and non-statutory policies will be ratified in line with the School Policies Schedule. The School Policies Schedule will be reviewed at every Governing Body meeting and policy reviews will be planned in advance of Governing Body meetings.

Whole Governing Board:

- To draw up the Instrument of Government and any amendments thereafter.
- To agree constitutional matters, including procedures where the Governing Board has discretion
- To ensure compliance with local and national guidance and regulations.
- To regulate the Governing Body procedures where not set out in law.
- To review the standing order for election of the Chair and Vice Chair including the length of the term of office.
- To approve membership of the Pay Committee annually (Resources Committee).
- To approve membership of the Headteacher's Appraisal Panel annually.
- To approve membership of the Whole Governing Board annually.
- To elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Whole Governing Board annually.
- To approve membership of the Resources and Finance Committee annually.
- To elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Resources and Finance Committee annually.
- To approve membership of the Curriculum and Standards Committee annually.
- To elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee annually.
- To assign Link Governors to monitor the priorities of the School Improvement Plan in line with the Link Governance Guidance at the first meeting of the autumn term.
- To approve role descriptors for the Link Governors, Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, and Governors.
- To encourage Governors to visit the school and to review, adopt and monitor a Governors' Visit Policy and Feedback Procedure.
- To take an active role in both the School and the Governance Self Evaluation, identifying success and areas requiring improvement.
- To update and review regularly the School Profile and School Improvement Plan identifying monitoring opportunities for the Governing Body.
- To update and review regularly the Governance Improvement Plan identifying areas of development.
- To work with the families of its pupils to foster positive home, school and community relationships and to review, at least annually, how the school is regarded by pupils, parents and staff.
- To continue its development as an outward facing establishment through continuing to build on its links and partnerships within and beyond the local community.
- To monitor the data provided by the school, LA and DfE and ensure necessary action is taken.
- To review admissions arrangements in conjunction with the Local Authority.
- To monitor overall Governance Membership and consider recruitment action to fill vacancies as appropriate.
- To ensure a suitable induction process and mentoring for newly appointed or elected Governors.
- To ensure Governors attend relevant training to continue their effectiveness.
- To ensure compliance with local and national guidance and regulations by monitoring information provided by the school, Governance Clerk, LA and DfE and ensure necessary action is taken by the Governing Body.

Operational

- To set a timetable of meetings to ensure at least 3 Governing Body meetings are held each year.
- To elect (or remove) the Chair and Vice Chair to the Governing Body.
- To appoint (or dismiss) the Governance Clerk to the Governing Body.
- To appoint (or remove) LA, Co-opted and any Associate Governors.
- To appoint (or remove) the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher.
- To suspend a Governor.

- To decide which functions of the Governing Body will be delegated and to whom and, to review the delegation arrangements annually.
- To receive reports from any pairs or individual to whom a delegation has been made and to consider whether any further action by the Governing Body is necessary.
- To set up a register of Governors' Business/Pecuniary Interests and Gifts and Hospitality.
- To regularly monitor the attendance of Governors at Governing Body meetings.
- To ensure the Headteacher provides such reports as requested by the Governing Body to enable it to undertake its role.
- To ensure the school has a Complaints Procedure for Parents and that parents know how to raise concerns and make a complaint.
- To ensure the school has a Complaints Procedure for Staff and that staff know how to raise concerns and make a complaint.
- To ensure that the statutory required information is published on the school's website.
- To ensure that the governing body complies with all other legal duties placed upon them.

Leadership and Management

- To develop and approve strategies for teaching and learning, and the curriculum that drives the development of the School Improvement Plan.
- To review regularly the school's progress against the strategies.
- To set and monitor non-financial key performance indicators and consider how these reflect local and national performance data.
- To ensure the Headteacher provides such reports, in a timely manner, as requested by the Governing Body to enable it to undertake its role.
- To ensure the Senior Leadership Team have put in place remedial actions, where needed.
- To review regularly the school's progress against School Improvement Plan.

Quality of Education

- To review and adopt a Curriculum Strategy Statement and ensure that all learners receive a broad and balanced, inclusive education in line with statutory requirements.
- To review and adopt a Teaching and Learning Strategy Statement and regularly review the quality and standards of teaching across the school

Safeguarding & SEND:

- To ensure Governors confirm they have read, understood and sign the following documents, annually:
 - Safeguarding Children Policy.
 - DFE Keeping Children Safe in Education.
 - Governor Code of Conduct Policy.
- To ensure all Governors attend Safeguarding and Prevent training, every three years.
- To monitor Safeguarding training for staff and ensure the training profile meets statutory requirements.
- To receive a regular report on Safeguarding and ensure Safeguarding is very effective.
- To review the Local Authority Safeguarding Audit Checklist and ensure that any actions are completed.
- To review, approve and monitor the implementation of policies for Safeguarding: Child Protection, Health and Safety, E Safety, Inclusion, Equalities, Anti-Bullying, Pupil Behaviour/Discipline, Safer Recruitment and other policies as appropriate.
- To ensure the Headteacher audits the Single Central Record, at least termly.
- To review a Single Central Record Governor Audit, annually.
- To review a Health & Safety Governor Audit, annually.
- To review and consider any actions taken following an accident and/or incident that involves the safeguarding of the pupils, staff and visitors at the school or on its premises.
- To receive a SEND Information Report, annually.
- To review the SEND Provision, annually.
- To monitor provision and access for pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities and work closely with the SEND Link Governor.

- To scrutinise the School Improvement Plan as an agenda item for each meeting, to keep the safeguarding elements and progress on actions under review.
- To receive a regular report on Safeguarding and ensure Safeguarding is very effective.

Pupil Discipline and Exclusions

- To establish a Statement of Behaviour Principles on which the school can produce a Behaviour Policy.
- To review an Exclusions Policy and ensure that the guidance meets statutory requirements.
- To review the use of exclusion and decide whether or not to confirm all permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions where a pupil is either excluded for more than 15 days in total in a term. (This may be delegated to the Chair in cases of urgency).
- When required, to approve membership of the Pupil Discipline Committee and the Pupil Appeals Committee.
- When required, to elect a Chair the Pupil Discipline Committee and the Pupil Appeals Committee
- To direct the reinstatement of excluded pupils.

Pupil and Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health

- To ensure that all pupils continue to learn and staff work in a happy, safe and caring environment, where relationships are built on mutual respect, and everyone is valued.
- To ensure that effective policies and procedures are in place, and are reviewed in a timely manner.
- To review the priorities for the development of Well-Being and Mental Health Strategy.
- To monitor the impact of the Well-Being Team.
- To ensure Risk Assessment procedures are in place and followed throughout the school, ensuring school is compliant.
- To complete governor training, and to evaluate this training with the Governing Body.
- To review the British Values Policy, annually.

Finance and Risk Management

- To review and ratify the annual school budget and the three-year Financial Plan, duly considering the School Improvement Plan's priorities.
- To closely monitor and review, at least six times per year, the school budget, including considerations of medium to long-term planning and resourcing and make decisions on expenditure above the Headteacher's delegated limits ensuring best value is applied to all spending.
- To review and approve contracts, service level agreements and insurance annually.
- To review end of year earmarked funding reports for Pupil Premium, PE and Sports Premium, and any other earmarked grants the school receives.
- To receive the Year End Accounts and reports annually.
- To monitor and respond, as necessary, to any local authority requests for input/consultation on finance related matters.
- To ensure that the school operates within the financial regulations of the appropriate Local Authority Financial Scheme and to annually review the Finance Manual, the Statement of Internal Control and the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS).
- To review and take account of any consultations to change the LA Finance Scheme.

Human Resources

- To receive an annual report from the Pay Committee to review the impact of and implementation of pay awards linking to the Pay Policy, Appraisal Policy for Teaching Staff and Appraisal Policy for Support Staff.
- To receive an annual report from the Headteacher's Appraisal Panel to review the impact of and implementation of any pay award for the Headteacher linking to the Pay Policy and Appraisal Policy for Teaching Staff.
- To establish a Governor Panel, when required, to hear staff appeals against dismissal, redundancy or grievances and action, as appropriate, any decisions relating to the outcomes of the Committee meeting.

- To review and agree all recommended HR policies including the Whole School Pay Policy.
- When required, to approve membership of the Staff Discipline Committee and the Staff Appeals Committee.
- When required, to elect a Chair the Staff Discipline Committee and the Staff Appeals Committee.
- To respond as necessary to any local authority requests for input/consultation on personnel related matters.

Premises and Health & Safety

- In conjunction with the Local Authority, implement, review and ratify annually, a Health & Safety Policy.
- To review a Health & Safety Governor Audit, annually.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- To lead the development, review and implementation of the School's approach to EDI and its associated strategy and action plan.
- To ensure the school complies with the Equality Act and promotes the value of different identities to create a culture that is respectful and inclusive.
- To ensure that equal opportunities for all pupils are encompassed within all school policies and procedures.
- To monitor provision and access for pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities and work closely with the SEND Link Governor.
- To regularly review reports on progress against the EDI objectives and action plan.
- To ensure the school provides tailored EDI training and development opportunities and resources.
- To engage with external stakeholders, community groups, sector groups and EDI experts to ensure the school remains informed of current EDI issues, shares best practice and builds an effective advisory and support network.
- To consider if governor diversity data reflects the community the school serves and upload a summary document to the school website.

Headteacher's Delegation

As lead professional, the Headteacher will be responsible for:

- The operational day to day management of the school.
- The appointment of all teaching and support staff below the level of the Headteacher, within the present staffing structure, whilst reserving the right for a Governor to be involved in interviewing panels.
- Leading the school towards the set targets.
- Formulating and implementing the policies.
- Decisions on the remission of charges whilst reserving the right to hear appeals from parents on such decisions.
- Management of the budget and alterations to the budget, including virements, which do not exceed the Headteacher's Scheme of Delegation.
- The power to spend within the Headteacher's Scheme of Delegation on purchases in accordance with existing budget plans which have been discussed at a governance meeting. The Headteacher will report to the next Whole Governing Body / Resources meeting on any such expenditure via regular budget monitoring reviews.
- In principle, the authority to make contract renewal, termination and dismissal decisions in accordance with the Portsmouth City Council's Personnel Manual although acknowledging that there may be instances where delegation of specific dismissals is not appropriate.
- Discharging many responsibilities on the Governing Body's behalf, as well as for discharging responsibilities imposed directly on them.

The Headteacher will give the Governing Body enough information for the Governors to feel confident that those delegated responsibilities and the Headteacher's own responsibilities, have been met. The Governing Body will ensure it receives enough information and evidence to allow it to monitor the

school's achievements and progress. In addition to information supplied by the Headteacher, other sources of information will include/be obtained through:

- Governor involvement as Link Governors as appropriate.
- Involvement in school events.
- Presentations etc. by members of staff to the Whole Governing body, C&S and Resources Committee
- Involvement in interview panels vacant positions.
- Critical consideration of data.

The Governing Body shall act as “critical friend” to the Headteacher; that is to say, it will support the Headteacher in the performance of their functions and give them constructive criticism.

Link Governors Delegation

Any individual to whom responsibility has been delegated is expected to work within the following terms of reference.

To monitor an identified target of the School Improvement Plan or a statutory function of the Governing Body and report to the Governing Body through an agreed number of visits as indicated on the Link Governor Guidance and Link Governor Monitoring Plan. Other forms of communication such as remote meetings, telephone calls, emails etc. may be substituted for a visit, where appropriate. A visit to the school does not necessarily have to take place during the school's operational times, and could be just as effective as a meeting between Governors and lead professionals at the end of the day, as mutually agreed. All Governors should follow the Governor Visits Policy.

Link Governor roles and/or statutory function will be approved by the Governing Body at the first meeting of the autumn term. Link Governors will ensure that the Governing Body receives regular updates on these activities.

Committee Delegation

The Governing Body has delegated responsibilities to four Committees of the Whole Governing Body (WGB); Curriculum and Standards Committee (C&S), Resources and Finance Committee (Resources), Pay Committee and Headteacher's Appraisal Committee. Committee Terms of References are reviewed annually by the Governing Body and are accessible through Governor Teams channel and the School website.

Steering Group Delegation

- To meet as and when required.
- A meeting may be called by the Whole Governing Body or the Chair acting on behalf of the Full Governing Body.
- A Chair will be elected at each sitting of the Steering Group from those Governors present.
- Quorum and other membership requirements where applicable, are listed in the Steering Group Terms of Reference.
- Steering Group agenda and meeting notes must be shared with the Full Governing Body in a timely manner.
- To act as a working party for any specific issues, implementation of new initiatives and Government/LA directives