

Lead (Link) Governors and their Responsibilities (31 January 2023)

Remit: The primary purpose of the Governing Body is to work for the school's improvement. It does this in the role of 'critical friend' to the school by

- (1) Supporting the Headteacher(s) in determining the strategy and direction of the school
- (2) Properly implementing statutory requirements
- (3) Monitoring, evaluating and actively participating in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and
- (4) Overseeing the financial performance of the School by making sure its money is well spent.

| Appointments | Term of Office 01 Sep 2022 – 31 Aug 2023 |
|---|--|
| Chair - Admissions Panel | Katharine Rabson Stark |
| Chair - Curriculum and EYFS Working Party | Katharine Rabson Stark |
| Chair - Ethos, RE, and SIAMs Working Party | Sarah Cottingham |
| Chair - Finance & Resources Committee | Katherine Hall |
| Chair - Forward Planning Working Party | Tim Murray |
| Chair – Governing Body | Tim Murray |
| Chair - Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Working Party | Katharine Rabson Stark |
| Chair - Safeguarding Working Party | Sarah Cottingham |
| Chair - SEND and Vulnerable Children Working Party | Zoe Holland (Associate Member) |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead | Graham Sullivan |
| Vice Chair - Finance & Resources Committee | Michael Davies |
| Vice Chair – Governing Body | Michael Davies |

GOVERNORS with PRIORITIES FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (Lead Governors = To be agreed with KRS/GS)

| LEAD GOVERNORS | QUALITY OF EDUCATION |
|----------------|---|
| | 1.1 Develop Federation approaches to the teaching of phonics. |
| | 1.2 Raise the standard of writing across the curriculum. |
| | 1.3 Design and implement a sequential, challenging, and unique curriculum accessible to all. |
| | 1.4 Develop growing confidence in the teaching and learning of Maths calculations. |
| | 1.5 Meet the needs and provide challenge to all our pupils. |
| | 1.6 Provide consistency in outcomes between key stages. Uphold standards during transition from year 2 to year 3. (Framfield Specific) |
| LEAD GOVERNORS | BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES |
| | 2.1 Refine each school's approach to promoting high standards of behaviour, including both behaviour for learning in classrooms and behaviour online. |
| | 2.2 Improve attendance of all pupils, and especially those with persistence absence. |
| LEAD GOVERNORS | PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT |
| | 3.1 Promote and develop stakeholder happiness to create 'a Federation living well and thriving together'. |
| | 3.2 Provide further opportunities for spiritual development. |
| | 3.3 Develop pupil voice, particularly including that of the most vulnerable, to elicit ideas on SMSC, School Improvement and Curriculum Design |
| LEAD GOVERNORS | LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT |
| | 4.1 Strengthen Cross-Federation leadership at all levels encouraging colleagues at all levels to articulate and demonstrate consistently high expectations. |
| | 4.2 Build confident, knowledgeable Subject Leaders, raising standards in both schools. |
| | 4.3 Develop safeguarding good practice across the Federation. |
| LEAD GOVERNORS | EARLY YEARS EDUCATION |
| | 5.1 Develop subject leaders' knowledge of EYFS curriculum. (Wise man built his house upon the Rock; Matthew Chapter 7 v 24-27) |
| | 5.2 Plan continuous provision (both inside and out) to develop opportunities for independent learning across the entire EYFS curriculum. |
| | 5.3 Make the best of links to Framfield Pre-School, and explore Pre-School opportunities at Blackboys. |

The Role of the Clerk (The Governance Handbook – October 2020)

High quality professional clerking is crucial to the effective functioning of the board:

- The Clerk must not be a governor, Headteacher (maintained), Trustee, CEO, or principal.
- The Clerk is the board's '**governance professional**', helping the board understand its role, functions and legal duties and supporting the chair to enable and facilitate strategic debate and decision making.
- The Clerk helps the board exercise its functions expediently and confidently, so that it can stay focused on its core functions.
- Clerks receive direction from and are accountable to, the Board through the Chair

Chair of Governors

The Role of the Chair (The Governance Handbook – October 2020)

The Chair, with support from the vice chair and the Clerk/ governance professional, is responsible for:

- effective functioning of the board
- setting the highest of expectations for professional standards of governance
- clear leadership and direction, focusing the board on its core strategic functions
- encouraging the board to work together as an effective team, building their skills, knowledge and experience.
- ensuring that everyone is actively contributing relevant skills and experience, participating constructively in meetings, and is actively involved in the work of any committees
- ensuring appropriate induction, training and development

Development and succession

'The focus of the procedure for appointing a chair and vice chair from among the existing members of the board, should be on appointing someone with the skills for the role, not just the willingness to serve. It is possible to appoint more than one person to share the role of chair, or similarly the role of vice chair, if the board believes this is necessary and in the best interests of the school. The board would need to ensure that any role-sharing arrangement does not lead to a loss of clarity in its leadership.'

Main functions

As 'first among equals', **the Chair** does not have any individual power, except in [cases of urgency](#). However, he/she does have a key leadership role on the board, according to guidance from the [National College for Teaching and Leadership](#) (NCTL).

The Chair's job is to:

- Work with the Headteacher to promote and maintain high standards of educational achievement
- Make sure that the governing board sets a clear vision, ethos and strategic direction for the school
- Work with the board to hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of your school and the performance management of staff
- Ensure financial oversight and value for money

The key duties include:

- **Leading effective governance** with strong leadership and clear strategic focus
- **Building the team** by recruiting effective governors and making sure they contribute their relevant skills and experience, upskilling as necessary
- **Building a strong relationship with the Headteacher** as a 'critical friend' by offering challenge, support and encouragement
- **Putting school improvement at the centre** of all policies and strategies, and making sure all scrutiny is focused on the school's priorities
- **Leading the business** by making sure all statutory requirements are met and board business is run efficiently
- **Ultimately, the Chair is responsible for Ofsted's Evaluation of the School. The School cannot be "Outstanding" if Governance is not "Outstanding".**

Good Chairs lead by example and ask for regular feedback from their board in order to improve their own effectiveness, and have an annual conversation with each person to discuss the impact of their contribution to the work of the board. (The Governance Handbook – October 2020).

Evaluation, appraisal and review . Systematic annual appraisal develops everyone on the governing board:

- appraisal of the clerk by the chair
- 360° review of the chair
- one-to-ones with individual governors
- skills audits and training plans
- governing board review and development plan

“Chair's action': your power to act in cases of urgency

Last reviewed on 15 December 2021

Ref: 4299

As a chair, be clear when you might use the 'chair's action' to make urgent decisions on your board's behalf, and see examples of how other schools do it.

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What is it and when might I need it?

The chair's action is your ability to make decisions and act on the governing board's behalf where it's not possible for the board to meet (either in-person or [virtually](#)). You should use it only for **urgent** duties that can't wait.

How do I know when something is urgent?

It's when you believe that not acting now will be seriously detrimental to:

- Your school, or
- Any pupil or their parent, or
- A staff member

What if the chair is absent?

- **Maintained schools:** if the chair is absent, the [vice-chair will have this power](#)

How do I activate it?

If you're the chair of a **Maintained school ...** You [have this power already](#), but if possible, you should act in consultation with the Headteacher. You must [report to the governing board](#) the action you took. You should also make sure the clerk records your actions.

What can I use it for?

You can use it for any function of the governing board which can be delegated to an individual (as per the [regulations](#) for maintained schools – academies, check your articles of association and scheme of delegation). For example: Handling a press response or Deciding whether to reinstate an excluded pupil

What can't I use it for?

You **can't** use it to, for example..... Discontinue the school, Approve the budget, or Suspend governors. See [regulation 19](#) of the School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 for more detail. These regulations apply to maintained schools. You also **can't** use chair's action to admit, or refuse to admit, pupils – this is a restriction under the [School Admissions Code](#) (paragraph 2.7).

And, as chair's action should only be used in genuinely urgent situations, it also wouldn't be appropriate to use it for routine functions like creating a new committee, approving a change to the senior leadership structure, or agreeing to an increase in the Headteacher's salary

What about approving policies?

You **shouldn't use** chair's action to approve a policy except under urgent, exceptional circumstances. The governing board is expected to plan its annual work cycle, so it should be able to follow the normal [statutory](#) process for approving policies.

Several statutory policies cannot be delegated to an individual to approve under normal governance procedures. Be clear on the process to approve a school policy [here](#).

Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair will:

- Develop a close working relationship with the chair
- Support the chair in ensuring the board functions effectively
- Take on responsibilities delegated by the chair

Together with the chair, the Vice-Chair will:

- Lead effective governance by providing clear direction to ensure governors understand the part they play in driving school improvement
- Build the team by recruiting effective governors and delegating effectively
- Develop a relationship with the Headteacher as a 'critical friend'
- Drive school improvement by ensuring it's the focus of all policies and strategies and that the work of the board reflects school improvement priorities
- Lead the business by ensuring it meets all statutory and regulatory requirements, provides value for money and business is conducted efficiently and effectively

In the chair's absence, the vice-chair will:

- Act as chair for any meeting of the governing board
- Make the casting vote when a vote is tied
- Exercise the functions of the chair in cases of urgency

At times when the Chair is absent or the office of the chair is vacant, the vice-chair will be prepared to take on the role of chair and will get to grips with all aspects of being Vice-Chair by learning how to:-

- [Chair meetings](#)
- [Cover for the chair](#)
- [Meet with the Headteacher](#)
- [Support and monitor your Headteacher's wellbeing](#)
- Induct [new governors effectively](#), including during [coronavirus](#) (direct them to our induction training [here](#) as well, to help them hit the ground running)

Lead (Link) Governors and Lead Governor Appointments

1. **Lead (Link) Governors will be appointed annually.**
2. Lead Governors will review appropriate Policies and, where so permitted, adopt the Policies **on behalf of the Governing Body.**
3. Any individual to whom a governor monitoring responsibility has been delegated is expected to work within the following terms of reference in conjunction with the protocols and procedures set out in the Monitoring Visits Policy.
 - a. To monitor an identified area on the School Plan or a statutory function of the Governing Board and report to the Governing Board, ensuring the challenge and support of the committee the monitoring is replacing is captured. It is expected that a minimum of 3 monitoring visits will be made to the school during the year, unless school circumstances necessitate more. A visit does not necessarily have to take place during the time when students / pupils are in school, and could be just as effective as a meeting between governor(s) and the lead professional at the end of the day as mutually agreed.
 - b. To meet with the lead professional within the school to gain an understanding of the scope of the area / target and the activities the school is conducting to achieve success.
 - c. To ensure holding to account by the questions which would have been asked as part of a committee meetings are undertaken within the visit with the answers documented.
 - d. To undertake any necessary training (in or out of school) to enable effective monitoring of the areas / subject.
 - e. To monitor the progress of school activities towards the priority milestone or duty.
 - f. To evaluate the extent of success at the end of the set timescale. All visits to the school will be arranged with reference to the Head teacher / Executive Leader and in accordance with the Governor Visits policy. Reports will be submitted for approval by the Head teacher and the Chair within the school within 1 week of the visit, and then be lodged with the Clerk of governors for distribution as soon as possible, at least 7 days before the next Governing Board meeting.

A link governor is a member of the board identified to lead on a specific area of work, providing support and challenge and reporting back to the governing board. Governing boards should collectively assign link governor roles, with the agreement of the individual taking the role, and reviewed annually.

Link Governor's role

A link governor's role is:

- to take a special interest in a particular area of responsibility
- to keep abreast of development locally and nationally
- to attend appropriate training
- to make focused visits to the school if appropriate
- to report back regularly to the governing board
- to develop positive links with and maintain a visible and professional profile in school.

Training and network sessions are a good opportunity for link governors to network and keep updated with the relevant information. More details of the training available can be found on the individual link governor roles.

Individual Link Governor Roles

The following are key aspects of governance where a link governor role is considered beneficial to the overall effectiveness of the governing board along with a brief responsibility of the role:

- 1) **Data Link Governor** – review and analyse a broad range of information and data in order to spot trends and patterns. Able to make sure that the board has a correct understanding of the school's performance. As well as being able to identify issues that need to be discussed as a priority at a governing board meeting. They may also work with the Headteacher in termly meetings so they can analyse the school's projected improvement in the current years data.
- 2) **Early Years Link Governor** – relevant to all Infant and Primary schools and would include taking a special interest in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), as well as ensuring that EYFS issues remain high on the school's agenda.
- 3) **Equality and Diversity Link Governor** - to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, promote good relations between people in a diverse community, promote community cohesion, and ensure priorities for equality and diversity are considered when reviewing school policies.
- 4) **Finance Link Governor** – review financial planning, positions and reports. Providing information to the board about financial matters when required. They may also liaise with the school business manager and Headteacher.
- 5) **Health and Safety Link Governor** - to monitor health and safety compliance by making sure that the school's actual current practice reflect procedures in the policy, asking staff for risk assessments and checking they're up to date, checking that staff are recording accidents and 'near misses' - look for any patterns that might cause concern, establishing a key performance indicator (KPI) for health and safety to help keep it a high priority and checking the health and safety policy complies with legislation and meets best practice.
- 6) **Human Resource Link Governor** – involved in monitoring the outcome of pay decisions, including the extent to which different groups of teachers may progress at different rates, and checks processes operate fairly.
- 7) **Information Governance Link Governor** – understands General Data Protection and how it affects the school and the governing board. Aware of what the school is doing as a whole to comply with the law and if the school's processes are robust and effective. Able to monitor the ongoing robustness of data protection processes.
- 8) **Pupil Premium Link Governor** - Maintaining an overview of the performance of children eligible for the pupil premium and reviewing the allocation of resources and impact of the pupil premium grant on educational outcomes. Understanding and keeping up to date with the pupil premium plan. Monitoring and ensuring the school meets all legislation surrounding school websites.
- 9) **Safeguarding Link Governor** – ensure the school has appointed and works with a school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) teacher who promotes the educational achievement of looked after children. Undertake between three to six full visits to the school per year with further single central record checks if required. Written reports provided for full governing board meetings. Request evidence from the DSL that: key areas of safeguarding and procedures have been adhered to; ensures gaps in practice and safeguarding are addressed properly.
- 10) **SEND Link Governor** – understand the governing board's responsibility under the special educational needs and disability (SEND) Code of Practice. Monitor SEN and disability provision, progress of pupils with SEN and report back to the governing board. Work alongside the school's SEN Co-Ordinator (SENCO) to regularly discuss the school's SEN provision, budget and resources. Responsible for making sure the school is meeting the needs for the SEN and disability pupils.
- 11) **Sports Premium Link Governor** – understand the achievements of the school's pupils in PE and sports. They Monitor and evaluate the grant and its impact. Able to update the governing board on any sports initiative competitions or activities with other schools.
- 12) **Training Link Governor** – responsible for working with the clerk to the governing board to understand where skill and/or knowledge gaps exist within the board. To review and identify relevant training and/or recruitment requirements to meet any gaps.

13) Wellbeing Link Governor – understands the risk and protective factors of good emotional health and wellbeing which schools can influence and challenge the school to support these through policies and the school development plan. They may also undertake monitoring visits in the school. It's their role to:

- Make sure wellbeing is included as an agenda item at every board meeting, so it stays on your board's radar and regularly remind governors about wellbeing aspects of all areas of the board's work.
- Keep up-to-date with any wellbeing requirements and help your chair consider governor wellbeing. Get some practical tips on how to protect governors' wellbeing [here](#)
- **How to monitor wellbeing** We recommend you either meet your wellbeing lead, or visit your school, at least once a term or 2-3 times a year. **Establish a focus for each visit** A visit's focus should be linked to any wellbeing priorities on your school improvement plan (SIP).
- **Evidence you can use to monitor wellbeing** Not everything to do with wellbeing can be measured with data, but there are sources of evidence you can look at to see the impact of wellbeing initiatives in your school. This might include..... Seeing a new wellbeing initiative in practice on a learning walk, sitting in on, and talking to pupils in, a wellbeing focus group, results from staff, parent and pupil wellbeing surveys, results from a wellbeing audit.
- Pupil [attainment and progress](#) This is to see if new initiatives have had an impact on pupil outcomes. The number and severity of behaviour incidents as a result of a wellbeing focus (your school may see fewer behaviour incidents such as violence or bullying).
- **The number of exclusions**..... This follows on from a reduction in behaviour incidents (outlined above). With fewer incidents, it's less likely pupils will be excluded as a result
- **Staff and pupil absence rates**. If staff and pupils feel happy and healthy, they're less likely to be off sick (for example, due to anxiety, stress or burnout)
- **Your school's HR spend**. If staff are off sick, it can be expensive for your school leaders to arrange cover while they're off. If fewer staff are off sick, this can reduce the amount of HR spend your school is using on supply staff
- **Staff turnover rates**. If your school's turnover rate is above 30% over the last 5 years, ask questions as to why this is (see example questions you can ask below)
- **Reports from senior leaders about conversations they've had with staff and pupils**. For example, you want to know if a new staff workload initiatives have been effective.
- **Questions to ask the mental health/wellbeing lead**. You don't need to (and shouldn't) ask all these questions in one meeting. Choose the questions you ask based on the chosen focus of your meeting or visit.
- **Example Questions**
 - How are you?
 - How are you managing your current workload?
 - Is there anything I can do to support you further?
 - How do you know there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in school?

The Key on 7th January 2022 - More resources for link governors

- [Literacy: role of the link governor](#)
- [Numeracy/maths: role of the link governor](#)
- [Curriculum: role of the link governor](#)
- [Safeguarding: role of the link governor](#)
- [SEND: role of the link governor](#)
- [Monitoring pupil premium: role of the link governor](#)
- [Finance: role of the link governor](#)
- [Careers link governor: role](#)
- [Inclusion/equality: role of the link governor](#)
- [Governor training and development: role of the link governor](#)