



Terms of Reference for the Full Governing Board

General Terms

Chichester Free School has high expectations of the Governing Board. They are the strategic leaders of our school and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education.

The three core strategic function on which the Governing Boards should focus are:



It is essential that the Governing Board recruit and develop Governors with the skills to develop their core functions effectively. It is important to emphasise that the skills required are those to oversee the success of the School, not to do the School's job for it.

It is essential to build a strong and cohesive non-executive team, the most robust Governing Boards welcome and thrive on having a diverse range of viewpoints such that open debate leads to good decisions in the interests of the whole school community.

Governing Boards are able to suspend a governor for acting in a way that is contrary to the ethos of the school.

Governors need to know their school, if accountability is going to be robust and their vision for the school is to be achieved. Through pre-arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors can see whether the school is implementing the policies and improvement plans they have signed off and how they are working in practice. Visits also provide an opportunity to talk with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views. Governors are not inspectors and it is not their role to assess the quality or method of teaching and learning. They are also not managers and should make sure that they do not interfere in the day to day running of the School. Both are the role of the Principal.

Ofsted has published the criteria that inspectors will use to judge the effectiveness of a school's governance. These criteria are consistent with the core functions of all Governing Boards:

- a) carry out their statutory duties, such as safeguarding, and understanding the boundaries of their role as Governors
- b) ensure that they and the School promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (including those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles; and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the School and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain
- c) ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, including long term planning.
- d) contribute to the School's self- evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching, and reviewing the impact of their own work
- e) understand and take sufficient account of pupil data
- f) assure themselves of the rigour of the assessment process
- g) are aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups
- h) provide challenge and hold the Principal and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety, including by using progress data, examination outcomes and test results; or whether they hinder school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns or developing their own skills
- i) use the Pupil Premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
- j) ensure solvency and probity and that financial resources are made available to the School are managed effectively
- k) are providing support for an effective Principal
- l) monitor performance management systems and how the School makes decisions about teachers' salary progression, including the performance
- m) management of the Principal, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- n) engage with key stakeholders
- o) are transparent and accountable, including in terms of recruitment of staff, governance structure, attendance at meetings and contact with parents and carers.

The Governance Structure

Role of the chair

An effective Chair of Governors;

1. works with the Principal to promote and maintain high standards of educational achievement
2. ensures that the Governing Board sets a clear vision, ethos and strategic direction for the School
3. with the Governing Board, holds the Principal to account for the educational performance of the School and its pupils , and for the performance management of the staff
4. ensures oversight of the financial performance of the School and effective use of the School's resources.

The Chair needs to ensure that all Governors understand the role and responsibilities of the Governing Board.

The key roles of the chair are:

- a) **Leading effective governance:** giving the Governing Board a clear lead and direction, ensuring that the Governors work as an effective team and understand their accountability and the part they play in the strategic leadership of the School and in driving school improvement.
- b) **Building the team:** attracting Governors with the necessary skills and ensuring that tasks are delegated across the Governing Board so that all members contribute, and feel that their individual skills, knowledge and experience are well used and that the overall workload is shared.
- c) **Relationship with the Principal:** being a critical friend by offering support, challenge and encouragement, holding the Principal to account and ensuring the Principal's performance management, is rigorous and robust.
- d) **Improving The school:** Ensuring school improvement is the focus of all policy and strategy and that governor scrutiny, monitoring and challenge reflect school improvement policies
- e) **Leading the business:** ensuring that statutory requirements and regulations are met, that the School provides value for money in its use of resources and that Governing Board business is conducted efficiently and effectively.

Governing Board

The Full Governing Board needs to take a strategic role, act as a critical friend to the School and be accountable for its decisions. It should set aims and objectives and agree, monitor and review policies, targets and priorities.

- Hold at least three meetings a year
- Appoint or remove the Chair or Vice Chair
- Appoint or remove the Clerk to the Governing Board
- Agree constitutional matters, including procedures where the Governing Board has discretion
- Recruit new members as vacancies arise and to appoint new Governors where appropriate
- Suspend a governor
- Provide induction for new Governors
- Maintain and update a file of pecuniary interest declarations
- Organise support and training for Governors
- Ensure at least two Governors are appointed and trained to complete the Principal's Performance Management.
- Agree with the Principal the dates of meetings for the year ahead

- Note term dates for the academic year and agree occasional days
- Establish the committees of the Governing Board and their Terms of Reference
- Appoint a Chair of any committee (if not delegated to the committee itself)
- Review annually which functions of the Governing Board will be delegated to committees, groups or individuals
- Receive reports from any individual or committee to whom a decision has been delegated and to consider whether any further action by the Governing Board is necessary
- Annually adopt the Self Evaluation Form (SEF)
- Approve the first formal budget plan of each financial year
- Review, approve and monitor the School Development Plan
- Receive Principal's Reports
- Review the pupil performance targets set by the Principal
- Review the level of exclusions
- Monitor attendance of pupils/staff/Governors
- Monitor the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- Review the report of accidents/incidents involving pupils/staff/governors and visitors
- Review, adopt and monitor examination/national test results
- Review, adopt and monitor the procedures for dealing with complaints from parents/carers
- Encourage governors to visit school and feedback
- Annually elect Lead Governors for: Safeguarding (including a Deputy), Governor Training, Curriculum, Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disadvantaged Pupils

Policies for which the Full Governing Board is Responsible

- Careers Guidance
- Child Protection
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school
- Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- NQT
- SEND Impact Report
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Use of Reasonable Force
- Collective Worship
- Critical Incident
- Whistleblowing
- Gifts and Hospitality
- Pecuniary Interest Register
- Skills Audit