



# Roots Federation

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR EARLY YEARS

## Terms of Reference

### FULL GOVERNING BOARD

This document outlines the key roles, responsibilities and structure of the Governing board of Roots Federation. It is not meant to be exhaustive in its content, rather giving a summary of all the main topics. For more detailed information please refer to The Governors Handbook 2015 (DoE), The School Inspection Handbook, September 2014 (OFSTED).

#### Purpose

According to the Dept. of Education there are three key responsibilities of the Governing Body:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

These functions came into force in September 2013 and in the criteria Ofsted inspectors use to judge the effectiveness of governance in both maintained schools and academies.

According to the Ofsted School Inspection Handbook there are 14 key responsibilities of a governing body and inspectors should consider whether governors:

- carry out their statutory duties, such as safeguarding, and understand the boundaries of their role as governors
- ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or 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
- ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, including long-term planning (for example, succession)
- 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
- understand and take sufficient account of pupil data, particularly their understanding and use of the school data dashboard
- assure themselves of the rigour of the assessment process
- are aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups
- provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety, including by using the data dashboard, other progress data, examination outcomes and test results; or whether they hinder school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns or developing their own skills.
- use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
- ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively

- are providing support for an effective headteacher
- monitor performance management systems and understand how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression , including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- engage with key stakeholders
- are transparent and accountable, including in terms of recruitment of staff, governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers.

## **Membership**

### 1. Governors

The Governing Board of Roots Federation consists of 13 governors as follows:

### 7 Co-Opted Governors

### 2 Parent Governors

### 1 Staff Governors

### 2 Head Teacher (HT)

### 1 Local Authority Governor

## **Terms of Office**

Member Appointed Governors hold their post for a four year term, Staff Governors hold their post for two years.

Governor Eligibility, forthcoming post ending dates, current vacancies & other current details will be reviewed termly

The appointment to the post of Clerk is agreed annually at the first GB meeting of the Autumn Term.

## **Members Details**

The Governing Body maintains the following records about its members:

- Personal contact details
- Committee membership
- Governors Pecuniary/Business Interest declarations
- Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks
- Confirmation of Eligibility declarations

These are reviewed at each GB meeting and updated annually, or more frequently if necessary

Personal information is stored within the school single central record and governor related business is recorded on Governor Hub

## **Chair, Vice Chair**

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to appoint a Chair & Vice-Chair at the first meeting of the GB after such a post becomes vacant. We have agreed that their term of office is three years, reviewed and reconfirmed by the Full Governing Body annually. These posts cannot be held by employees of the school.

The Governing Body is also empowered to remove the incumbent Chair and Vice-Chair during the term of office should the Governing Body consider this action appropriate.

### **Clerk to the Governing Body**

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to:

- Appoint a Clerk to the Governing Body at the start of the Autumn Term, or re-affirm the appointment of the existing Clerk.
- Remove the incumbent Clerk during the term of office should the Governing Body consider this action appropriate, and appoint a replacement Clerk to cover the end of the outgoing Clerk's current term.
- Appoint a replacement Clerk at the next full meeting of the Governing Body if the Clerk resigns during the one year term. This Clerk will hold the post until the end of the existing term of office.
- The post of Clerk cannot be held by any of the existing Governors including the Head Teacher. In the absence of the Clerk, a meeting may be clerked by one of the attending Governors, but not the Head Teacher.

### **Meetings**

Attendees: All Governors are expected to attend GB meetings. Other invites to GB meetings are issued at the discretion of Chair of Governors.

Apologies: Apologies must be made in advance; Governor apologies will be considered at the GB meeting and accepted if agreed by the majority of attending Governors

Quorum: A GB meeting is able to proceed when at least 50% of Governors in post are present excluding the headteacher.

Chairing the meeting: The Chair of the GB will chair GB meetings unless they delegate the task to another Governor. In the unplanned absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will officiate at the meeting.

Decisions: The GB will generally make decisions by consensus. Where voting is applied to the decision making process, unless otherwise decided by the GB beforehand, the outcome of any vote will be determined by a majority of greater than 50%. In the event of a tied vote the Chair of the meeting has a deciding second vote or the right of veto.

Pecuniary / Business Interest: The "Standing Order for the Declaration of Pecuniary / Business Interests" applies.

Confidentiality: All items discussed at GB meetings are confidential to the Governors until the minutes of the meeting are approved, unless otherwise clearly stated in the meeting.

Electronic Attendance: Any Governor will be able to participate in meetings of the Governors by telephone or video conference provided that the governor participates in the whole agenda item discussion and not just the vote; and if after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for the person to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting will still proceed with its business provided it is quorate.

### **Frequency**

As a minimum, the Governing Body meets as follows, exceeding its legal obligations to meet 3 times a year:

Autumn Term Meeting 1. Takes place at start of year before any committees meet so that terms of reference and membership of these committees can be ratified and the year planning is agreed. Chair and Vice Chair are elected.

Autumn Term Meeting 2. Takes place at the end of term after Committee meetings

Spring Term Meeting 1. Takes place at the end of term after Committee meetings

Summer Term Meeting 1. Takes place at the end of term after Committee meetings

## **Agenda**

The agenda is prepared by the Chair in partnership with the HT and Clerk & will incorporate all matters arising from the previous meeting. Any items submitted by other governors for consideration must be sent to The Chair and Clerk 1 weeks prior to the FGB meeting to ensure inclusion in the agenda.

## **Minutes**

Minutes are taken at the meetings by the Clerk. The draft is checked by chair and HT, and minutes issued to governors within two weeks of meeting. Minutes are approved at the following meeting, and then published on the website.

At each FGB meeting there is a facility for a Part 2 meeting. The type of things in part 2 include – confidential items where student or staff names might be revealed; additionally time-sensitive items, which are confidential at the moment, but might be public in future. Part 2 minutes are not published on the website.

## **Statutory Responsibilities**

There are 7, namely:

- SEN
- Teachers pay
- Admissions
- School statement of behaviour
- Staff discipline, capability and grievance
- Child protection and
- Supporting pupils with medical needs.

## **Delegation of Responsibilities**

The Governing body may delegate any of its functions (with the exception to those listed below) to:

A committee.

- Any governor other than a governor who is the head teacher.
- The head teacher, where the function being delegated does not directly concern the head teacher.
- Where the governing body has delegated functions, this does not prevent the governing body from exercising those functions.

The governing body must review annually the functions they have delegated.

The governing body may not delegate the following functions to an individual, although they can be delegated to a committee.

Approval to the first formal budget plan of the financial year

- Suspension of governors

- Permanent exclusion of pupils

Any individual or committee with delegated responsibility must report to the governing body advising of all actions taken or decisions made relating to that delegated function.

### **Retained Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

The following responsibilities remain the responsibility of the whole governing body.

- Review and document approval of all delegation arrangements annually.
- Review the committee structures annually.
- Review the purpose and delegated authority of committees annually.
- Annually appoint the following Link Governors
- Training & Development Governor
- Safeguarding Governor
- Inclusion (inc SEN & EAL) Governor
- Finance Governor
- Health & Safety Governor
- Wellbeing Governor
- Together with the Headteacher's set the strategic direction of the school.
- Together with the Headteacher's the school's vision, mission, values, ethos & priorities in line with strategy
- Determine the standards of conduct for the entire school community.
- Contribute to, approve and review the school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF)
- Review & approve the School Improvement Plan (SDP)
- Review & approve all statutory School Policies. Non-statutory policies are delegated.
- Monitor admissions, admission appeals & pupil number trends

The Governing Body also has responsibilities towards its own members:

- Provide induction for new governors
- Ensure provision of CPD to governors by organizing support and training
- Facilitate governors' visits to school
- Undertake an annual Governance Self Evaluation
- Advertise parent governor vacancies to parents & staff governor vacancies to staff

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE – COMMITTEES**

### **Purpose and Functions**

The purpose of committees is to enable the governing body to effectively fulfil its three key roles in a time-efficient way.

Committees will consider matters as set out in their terms of reference or as requested by the governing body, taking advice as appropriate.

Each committee will recommend the powers that should be delegated to it by the governing body. The governing body will approve or modify these powers as it sees fit and such delegated powers will then form part of the terms of reference for that committee. The governing body will need to satisfy itself that the set of terms of reference, taken across all committees, constitutes a coherent suite.

### **Membership and Chairing**

Unless otherwise specified each committee will consist of a maximum of three governors. The Chair of Governors and a specified member of the Senior Leadership Team will be ex-officio members of all committees except the Pupil Discipline, Staff Grievance, and Appeals committees.

All committees are required by the regulations to have a clerk appointed by the governing body.

The committee will elect a chair from among the members of the committee. In the absence of the chair at a meeting the committee will elect any member to act as chair for that meeting.

Committees may invite non-governors to attend but in a non-voting capacity.

### **Voting and Quorums**

Only governors and appointed Associate Members can vote. No vote may be taken at any meeting where Associate Members outnumber governors.

Each committee will determine its own quorum which shall be not less than three governors.

### **Minutes and Meetings**

Minutes of meetings will record those present, the date and any decisions, action points or recommendations. Any recommendations must be written in such a way as to offer the governing body a clear proposal or alternatives to debate and decide upon.

The minutes represent a record of governors' deliberations and decisions, and, as such, may be reviewed by others (e.g. inspectors or auditors) as a means of determining how governors have undertaken their role in scrutinising matters and reaching decisions. While the minutes need not be a verbatim account of discussions, or necessarily attribute views expressed, or issues raised, to individual governors, if they do not adequately record a sense of the governors' deliberations and scrutiny of matters considered, then they will not necessarily serve as a record of governors' input to the management of the school.

Minutes will be circulated to all members of the committee and the chairs of other committees as soon as possible after the meeting, and to all governors with the agenda of the next governing body meeting.

The committee will meet some weeks in advance of each governors' meeting and at other times as they see fit.

### **Procedures and Training**

The membership of the committee will be determined at the first meeting of the governing body in the autumn term. Casual vacancies will be filled at the first available governors' meeting. The terms of reference of the committee will be reviewed annually.

The normal procedures and regulations of the governing body also apply to its committees.

Members of the committee should take steps to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills by attending appropriate training. Governors elected/ appointed to the Finance committee should ensure they are adequately inducted in their responsibilities for the school's financial management, and a formal assessment of the collective competence of the governing body in financial management is maintained (SFVS – Schools Financial Value Standard)

# FINANCE COMMITTEE

Acting in accordance with the school's Schedule of Financial Delegation and with other applicable requirements, e.g. legal and policy requirements and those of any external financial management standard that schools are expected to meet (to ensure that the school's financial management reflects recognised 'best practice')

1. To establish that the school maintains sound systems, practices and procedures to provide effective internal control. To review the existence and effective operation of internal controls (by placing reliance on suitable audits of those controls and/or confirming that appropriate in-house reviews or self-assessments of those controls have been undertaken – and that the appropriate action is taken in response to the results of any audit or control self-assessment).
2. To prepare, monitor and review financial policy statements.
3. To provide guidance and assistance to the Headteacher and governing body on financial matters.
4. To prepare / review longer-term financial plans having regard to roll projection and signals from central government and the LA regarding future years' budgets.
5. In consultation with the Headteacher, to consider the school's income and to draft the first formal budget in the financial year for the governing body to consider.
6. To monitor spending against budget and to ensure that expenditure remains within the prescribed limits.
7. To monitor expenditure of all voluntary funds held by the school.
8. To authorise the signing of monitoring reports to the LA.
9. To assist the committee dealing with personnel in determining salary levels for individual posts.
10. To review the school's pay policy, including criteria relating to the use of discretionary elements for pay provisions, and to make recommendations.
11. To review the performance management policy and monitor its implementation.
12. To review the staffing structure as necessary and, at least annually, in relation to the School Development/Improvement Plan.
13. To advise the governing body on such matters as the budget needed to run the school in accordance with statutory requirements and the School Development/Improvement Plan ensuring that the governing body's financial policy and actions are in accordance with legislation, other statutory requirements and the LA's financial regulations prioritising on major items of expenditure the purchasing of goods and services in the context of Best Value requirements generating additional income.
14. To review policies delegated to it by the governing body, and to report recommendations at the next full governing body meeting.
15. To ensure that the school's approach to procurement, contracting and commissioning is consistent with the authority's Contract Regulations and should achieve 'best value'. In particular, to oversee the monitoring of the school's contracts for the supply of goods and services (to ensure that these are satisfactory) and to ensure that at regular intervals there is 'market testing' of contracted supplies to determine whether better value alternatives are available.

16. To ensure that the school's financial procedures remain comprehensive and relevant (so as to ensure that 'due procedures' clearly define the processes that management intends should operate and that staff and other persons expected to follow those procedures are clear what they are). To confirm that these procedures feature adequate and effective internal controls.