



## **Governing Body**

### **Terms of reference for committees**

### **Constitutional matters**

#### **ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

The Department for Education states that Governing Bodies –

*“....are the strategic leaders of our schools and have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. For maintained schools this is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of maintained school governing bodies is to ‘conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school’.*

*In all types of schools, governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:*

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

*These functions are reflected in regulations for maintained schools that came into force in September 2013.”*

At Townsend Church of England School, in common with other schools, governors have a strategic role in the development of the school but are not involved in the day-to-day management. Governors need to be clear about the aims and values of the school and prepared to work with the school as a critical friend recognising and celebrating achievements, supporting and encouraging strategies to bring about improvements, but also asking challenging questions to ensure objectives are met.

The Governing Body at Townsend Church of England School brings a wide range of skills and experience to their roles which is of great value to the leadership team and wider school community. Governors take their role seriously and seek to improve their knowledge by attending training courses, workshops and conferences as appropriate.

#### **ORGANISATION AT TOWNSEND VOLUNTARY AIDED CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL**

The Full Governing Body meets at least three times a year and additionally if circumstances require. At each meeting governors receive a report from the Headteacher, and often other staff, and the minutes or a briefing from the various committees. Other items are discussed or approved at specific times of the year, for example examination results in September, plans for school improvement and budget in the spring term. Some important items are a standing item on the meeting agenda, e.g. safeguarding, reports from sub-committees and working groups.

The main Governing Body is supported by two main committees which meet at least once a term and additionally as required:

1. **The Finance and General Purposes Committee** deals with budget and finance, premises and health and safety, and relevant aspects of safeguarding, and other matters delegated by the Full Governing Body. Some relevant pay, terms and conditions of service and staff related items may be considered by this committee.
2. **The Curriculum and Standards Committee** deals with standards, safeguarding and child protection, curriculum matters, examination results/outcomes, well-being and pastoral care, special educational needs, and disability, disadvantaged and pupil premium students, and other matters delegated by the Full Governing Body.

All governors with the exception of the ex-officio governor are members of at least one of the sub-committees listed above. Other sub-committees or working groups are formed as appropriate e.g. academisation, development.

### **Other sub-committees**

#### **1. Policy and Urgency Committee**

Membership is comprised of the Chair of Governors, the Vice Chair of Governors, the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee and the Headteacher. This committee considers issues that are urgent or concerned with strategy, overall policy or items delegated by the Full Governing Body or referred by the Chair of Governors or the Headteacher. The committee will also deal with issues that arise between Full Governing Body and the other Committee meetings. The Policy and Urgency Committee also formally acts as the governors' Personnel Committee for matters not covered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

#### **2. Governors' Disciplinary Committee**

All governors are appointed to this committee with a panel being selected as required from that membership. The committee considers issues relating to suspensions or permanent exclusions if not covered by other committees or by the Full Governing Body.

#### **3. Admissions & Appeals Committee**

All governors are appointed to this committee with a panel being selected as required. The committee considers applications to join the school and revisions to the admissions policy if not undertaken by the Full Governing Body.

#### **4. Personnel Committee**

The work of this committee is delegated by the Full Governing Body to the Policy and Urgency Committee, or to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for relevant matters. The personnel committee would also consider issues arising from staff discipline, grievance, complaints, and whistleblowing.

### **Other involvement in challenge, support, monitoring and evaluation**

Governors visit the school to see the day to day experience of the students and staff, often a visit will have a specific focus e.g. assessment and marking, student wellbeing, behaviour.

Governors also attend school events such as secondary transfer evening, the four annual Cathedral services, school play performances, music concerts and parents/carers consultation evenings.

## **COMMITTEES OPERATION AND ORGANISATION**

### **1. Membership and Chairing**

Unless otherwise specified, each committee will consist of a maximum of four governors not including ex officio governors. Non-governors may also be co-opted onto a committee with the approval of the Chair of Governors, Headteacher, and a majority of the Governing Body. The Chair of Governors and the Headteacher will be ex-officio members of all committees. The Dean of St Albans or equivalent is also appointed by the school Trust Deed as an ex-officio Foundation Governor.

All committees are required to have clerking or secretarial arrangements approved by the Governing Body and the Headteacher.

The Governing Body will appoint a Chair of any committee established. 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.

### **2. Voting and Quorums**

Only governors and governor-appointed persons can vote.

Each committee will have a quorum which shall be not less than three governors.

Decisions not able to be made due to the meeting not being quorate will be taken to the next meeting of the Full Governing Body, the Policy and Urgency Committee, or other governor committee meetings. Urgent matters will be referred to the Policy & Urgency Committee or email approval can be considered as is appropriate.

The Governing Body has approved the use of remote conference calls or video meetings, the use of email consultations and decision-making for any matter agreed upon either by the Full Governing Body, any properly constituted governor committee, or approved by the Chair of Governors and Headteacher.

### **3. Minutes and Meetings**

Minutes of meetings will record those present, the date and any decisions, action points or recommendations. Any recommendations must be presented in such a way as to offer the Governing Body/Committee a clear proposal or alternatives to debate and decide upon. Matters delegated by the Full Governing Body to a Committee can be agreed by that Committee unless specifically agreed or specified otherwise.

Minutes will be circulated to all members of the Committee, and to all governors when available in preparation for the next Full Governing Body meeting. Exceptions may have to be made for some confidential items, some commercially sensitive items, some items concerning individuals, or some legally active issues that may require future governor involvement free of prior knowledge, as long as confirmed by the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher acting together, or by the Policy and Urgency Committee.

The Committee(s) will normally meet prior to each Full Governing Body meeting and at other times as they see fit to properly discharge their duties.

### **4. Functions**

Each committee will consider matters as set out in its Terms of Reference or as requested by the Full Governing Body, or the Policy and Urgency Committee, or raised by the Chair of Governors or the Headteacher, taking advice as appropriate.

The Governing Body will from time to time delegate issues, powers or decisions to Committees and these then become part of the Terms of Reference for that Committee.

**For Committees other than the Finance and General Purposes or the Policy and Urgency Committees,** any decisions which require a spending commitment over and above the agreed budget provision should, unless urgent, be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee or the Policy and Urgency Committees. The Chair of the Committee should also check before committing expenditure to ensure that there is no significant change in the financial position.

## **5. Procedures and Training**

The membership of the Committees will be determined by the Chair of Governors and Headteacher working together or by the Policy and Urgency Committee in the autumn term. Casual vacancies will be filled at the first available meeting. The Terms of Reference of the committees will be reviewed at intervals. The normal procedures and regulations of the Full Governing Body also apply to its committees, e.g. declarations of pecuniary interests, and operating procedures. The Finance and General Purposes, Curriculum and Standards, and Policy and Urgency Committees should have Safeguarding as a standing agenda item. Other standing items may be directed by the Full Governing Body or by the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher or may be decided by each Committee. Members of the Committee should take steps to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills, for example by attending appropriate training.

## **COMMITTEES DEALING WITH PERSONNEL**

For Townsend Church of England School, this will be the **Policy and Urgency Committee** unless within the remit or relevant to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The Committee has the following responsibilities.

- 1) To consider and review the school's Staff Pay and Performance Management/Appraisal Policy. It would be usual to adopt or adapt the County Council or Herts for Learning Model Policies unless there is a pressing reason not to do so.
- 2) Determine or confirm salary levels for senior posts.
- 3) To review the performance management policy and monitor its implementation.
  - In conjunction with the Finance and General Purposes Committee, to establish the annual and longer-term salary budgets and other costs relating to personnel, e.g. Continuing Professional Development of staff and governor training.
- 4) To review the staffing structure as necessary.
  - If appropriate, to recommend to the Governing Body staff selection procedures, ensuring that they conform with safe recruitment practice, and to review these procedures as necessary. Note that the responsibility for all appointment below the level of Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher rest with the Headteacher.
- 5) To undertake any formal consultations on personnel matters.
- 6) To review and recommend as appropriate for adoption by the Full Governing Body procedures for dealing with staff discipline and grievance.
- 7) To ensure that a Whistleblowing Policy is in place.
- 8) Should the need arise, to draft, in consultation with staff, criteria for redundancy, for approval by the Full Governing Body.
- 9) To liaise with the HCC/Herts for Learning Human Resource/Personnel team as appropriate.

## COMMITTEES DEALING WITH PREMISES

For Townsend Church of England School this is the **Finance and General Purposes Committee**. The committee has the following responsibilities.

- 1) To provide support and guidance for the Headteacher on all matters relating to the school premises and grounds, security and health and safety.
- 2) To monitor and revise the premises elements of the Accessibility Plan.
- 3) To inspect the premises and grounds annually and prepare a report on any issues identified and a proposed order of priorities for maintenance and development.
- 4) To approve the costs and arrangements for repairs, maintenance and redecoration beyond the budget allocation and to oversee the preparation and implementation of contracts.
- 5) To be aware of the respective responsibilities of the Governing Body, the Diocese of St Albans, and Hertfordshire County Council in relation to premises, to ensure that Hertfordshire County Council or the Diocese of St Albans is informed of any matters for which it has responsibility, and to monitor such issues in order to ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- 6) To ensure that regular safety and security audits are conducted and ensure that the school complies with health and safety regulations.
- 7) To report findings of Health and Safety inspections and audits to the Headteacher and liaise with him/her to ensure that action is taken as appropriate.
- 8) To seek advice from Hertfordshire County Council and the Diocese of St Albans as appropriate.
- 9) To ensure the discharge of governors' responsibilities regarding litter under the Environmental Protection Act and related statutes.
- 10) To oversee a lettings and charges policy and to monitor and evaluate the implementation of that policy.
- 11) To consider and make recommendations on risk management and insurance arrangements with regard to premises-related matters.

## COMMITTEES DEALING WITH FINANCE

For Townsend Church of England School this is the **Finance and General Purposes Committee**. The committee has the following responsibilities.

- 1) To prepare and review financial policy statements.
- 2) To provide guidance and assistance to the Headteacher and Governing Body on financial matters.
- 3) To prepare longer-term financial plans having regard to roll projection and signals from central government and the Education and Skills Funding Agency/Hertfordshire County Council regarding future years' budgets.
- 4) In consultation with the Headteacher to consider the school's income and expenditure and the draft budget for the financial year.
- 5) To approve the school's annual budget on behalf of the Full Governing Body.
- 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 monitor the Governors Account held by the school.
- 9) To monitor the signing of financial reports to Hertfordshire County Council.
- 10) Where appropriate to assist the committee dealing with personnel in determining salary levels for individual posts and to consider other staff related issues as appropriate.
- 11) To act in accordance with the school's Schedule of Financial Delegation.
- 12) To advise the Governing Body on such matters as
  - the budget needed to run the school in accordance with statutory requirements and the School Improvement Plan
  - ensuring that the Governing Body's financial policy and actions are in accordance with legislation, other statutory requirements and Hertfordshire County Council/Education Funding Agency financial regulations
  - prioritising major items of expenditure
  - the purchasing of goods and services in the context of Best Value requirements
  - generating additional income
  - reviewing annually and establishing an adequate carry forward figure to ensure the future security and stability of the school being cognisant of national and local organisational and funding arrangements and budget availability.
  - review and monitor the policy on charging and remissions and the conduct of school journeys and visits and other off-site pupil activity.
- 13) To ensure compliance with the statutory financial standards arrangements.

## COMMITTEES DEALING WITH CURRICULUM

For Townsend Church of England School this is the **Curriculum and Standards Committee**. The committee has the following responsibilities.

- 1) To advise the Governing Body on the school's Curriculum Policy and its statutory obligations regarding the curriculum.
- 2) With the assistance of staff, to monitor and evaluate the delivery of the curriculum.
- 3) To review, approve and monitor the implementation of policies for curriculum areas, disadvantage/Pupil Premium pupils, Special Educational Needs and Disability, Collective Worship, race equality and pupils' behaviour/discipline, Safeguarding and Child Protection, and Attendance.
- 4) To be satisfied of the school Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures, policies and practices.
- 5) To ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met, and that arrangements to support pupils deemed as meeting the criterion for the Pupil Premium are appropriate and monitored.
- 6) At least annually to receive a report on the quality and standards of pupil achievement, and to identify any necessary Governing Body actions.
- 7) After consultation with the Headteacher and staff, to identify priorities for the School Development/Improvement Plan and to consider the draft plan for discussion and approval by the Full Governing Body.



- 8) To oversee and to contribute to the school self-evaluation.
- 9) To monitor progress on implementing the School Action/Development/Improvement Plan.
- 10) Challenging the school and monitoring standards of curriculum delivery and outcome.
- 11) Reviewing and monitoring the school curriculum provision.
- 12) To prepare governors for inspections by Ofsted and by the Church of England (SIAMS).

## **POLICY & URGENCY COMMITTEE**

**Membership:** Headteacher, Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of Governors, Chair of Curriculum and Standards Committee, Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee. Noting that the above posts may be held by the same person i.e. Vice Chair being also the Chair of one of the committees listed.

**Quorum:** Two of those entitled to attend plus the Headteacher.

1. To be available and respond on behalf of the Full Governing Body to matters of particular difficulty, sensitivity or urgency and offer advice/support to the Headteacher.
2. To fulfil the role of Personnel Committee as delegated by the Full Governing Body, accepting that some relevant matters may also be dealt with by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
3. To undertake ad-hoc tasks as delegated to them by the Full Governing Body or requested by the Chair of Governors or the Headteacher.
4. To act as appropriate and as necessary as the Governing Body executive committee.

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**Membership:** Five governors

**Quorum:** Three (there must not be an even number of governors).

1. To consider matters relating to staff discipline and grievance in accordance with agreed procedures, and to make such decisions as fall to it to make under those procedures.
2. The procedures and practices will follow the model policies provided by Hertfordshire County Council or Herts for Learning and adopted/adapted by the Governing Body.
3. To make any determination or decision under the Governing Body's Complaints, Grievance, or Whistleblowing Procedures.

## **GOVERNORS' DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

**Membership:** Five governors – noting that all governors will be selected from the membership as appropriate.

**Quorum:** Three.

1. In accordance with statutory requirements to consider the actions of the Headteacher in permanently excluding a pupil, to consider representations made by parents/carers, and, if appropriate, to determine whether the pupil is to be reinstated.
2. To consider any parental/carers representations concerning suspensions as provided for in the regulations.



3. Procedures and practices will follow Hertfordshire County Council guidelines as adopted/adapted by the Governing Body and will adhere to national regulations.

## **ADMISSIONS & APPEALS COMMITTEE**

For Townsend Church of England School it would be normal to instruct Hertfordshire County Council to act on behalf of the Governing Body in all matters connected with arranging and hearing admission appeals.

**Membership:** Five governors and the Headteacher – noting that all governors will be selected from the membership as appropriate.

**Quorum:** Three.

1. Annually to review admission criteria, consulting other admission authorities if necessary, and to make recommendations to the Full Governing Body.
2. In accordance with the published admission criteria and arrangements, to determine which children shall be admitted to the school. Once the allocation has been made and communicated to Hertfordshire County Council under the coordinated admissions scheme, Hertfordshire County Council will be commissioned to administer on behalf of the school any continued interest lists and in-year admissions with authority normally delegated to the headteacher on behalf of the Admissions Panel.
3. To consider the admissions criteria of other local admission authorities if considered as affecting Townsend Church of England School and to take action as appropriate.
4. To hear appeals against decisions of the Staff Discipline and Grievance Committee about staff discipline or grievances, in accordance with agreed procedures.
5. To hear appeals against decisions by the Headteacher in relation to staff discipline and dismissal.