WOOLENWICK SCHOOLS

Terms of Reference for Committees 2026/2027

General Role of the Governing Board

The Governing Board is the regulatory authority of Woolenwick Schools.

For full Governing Board meetings, the quorum is half the number of serving governors. If a meeting is not quorate, or if Governors leave during the meeting and it loses its quorum, the meeting cannot take further decisions, but it can make recommendations, to be ratified later.

The Governing Board will meet at least once a term or as required.

The board should ideally not meet without the Headteacher or their nominated representative present, however, some governing board business may need to continue and the board will consider every situation individually and make a recorded decision.

The Governing Board recognises its strategic role and that it would be impractical to undertake all day-to-day activities. It is, therefore, necessary to delegate a number of its functions to committees and the Headteacher. These delegations outlined below.

The Governing Board must review the delegation of functions annually and remains accountable for any decisions taken by committees, working parties and individuals.

The Governing Board recognises the need to ensure compliance with all legal and financial reporting requirements and controls as issued by Herts for Learning/Hertfordshire County Council and the Department of Education (including the Schools Financial Value Standard). This will be reviewed annually to ensure we are up to date and undertaking this work in a timely and appropriate way.

Where any committee proposes a new policy (or a variation to the existing policy) that affects or may affect the schools' finances, it will require formal ratification at a Full Governing Board meeting.

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 board a clear proposal or alternatives to debate and decide upon. Minutes will be circulated to all governing board members 3 days before the meeting.

The Head will provide his report with supporting papers 3 days before any FGB or Committee meeting. Governors should read the report in advance of the meeting and put 2 questions to the Head (copying in the clerk) no later than 24 hours before a FGB meeting. There will be no requirement to put questions to the Head before a Committee meeting, but it would be prudent to put any questions you do have to the Head in advance, to make the meetings more constructive.

Meetings Protocol

The Governors will respect the confidential nature of the school's business. Governors can be suspended or dismissed for inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour and bringing the school into disrepute.

If a Governor misses three consecutive meetings, they shall be contacted in writing. Mitigating circumstances would be taken into account i.e. long-term illness. Governors may be disqualified if they have failed to attend meetings for six months, following a resolution proposing disqualification made to the full Governing Board. If Governors know that they will be absent from full Governing Board meetings, they must notify the Clerk to the Governors **in advance** giving a valid reason. Apologies for absence must be *approved or not approved* at every meeting.

It is expected that Governors will attend meetings having pre-read associated paper work and will attend meetings prepared to participate, ask questions and appropriately challenge where appropriate.

Governors should be mindful that their Code of Conduct applies at all times.

Responsibilities of the Full Governing Board

The board has three core functions: (Governance Handbook, Department of Education).
1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

The responsibilities will be broken down under these three headings.

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.

The Governing Board will make executive decisions in accordance with the School's Instrument of Governance; School and Hertfordshire County Council/Herts for Learning adopted policies, regulations and the law. The following list encompasses the key responsibilities and whether they are delegated to specific Committees. They are not exhaustive and will be reviewed annually.

Contribute to and monitor the effectiveness of the School Development Plan. After consultation with the Headteacher and staff, to identify priorities for the School Development Plan and to consider the draft plan for discussion and approval by the governing board. To monitor, at least once a term, progress on implementing the School Development Plan.

School Self Evaluation

Review annually school session times and dates of terms and holidays.

Appointment of Headteacher and other leadership roles (Delegated Committee). All other recruitment issues are delegated to the Headteacher.

The Link Governor for Health and Safety should liaise with the school's caretaker to carry out termly health and safety checks and present an annual report to the Full Governing Board.

Policies

To review, approve and monitor the implementation of policies.
The clerk and the chair will maintain a rolling timetable of renewing and ratifying policies, which will be added to governing board agendas as appropriate. This also includes;

- Home School Agreement
- Freedom of Information Scheme
- Keep under review the general and specific duties under current equality legislation Establish and publish annually an 'Equality Information and Objectives Statement', and to report on the impact of these. Every four years a new plan should be created.
- Establish an Accessibility Plan and review it every three years.
- Recommend a Behaviour statement (which will align with school policy), and from time to time review measures to promote among pupils self-discipline and proper regard for authority with a view to encouraging good behaviour on the part of pupils.

2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.

At least termly to receive a report from the Headteacher on;

- The quality of teaching (receiving reports from the finance committee on pay recommendations)
- The standards of pupil achievement, attainment and progress and how this compares within county and nationally.

- The school's achievements
- Progress and attainment of Pupil Premium Grant pupils, Ever 6 pupils, SEND pupils and other vulnerable children in order to 'Narrow the Gap'.
- Receive regular data on attendance, exclusion and behaviour issues.

To receive reports on the schools response to the statutory obligations regarding the curriculum. With the assistance of staff, to monitor and evaluate the impact of the delivery of the curriculum.

Receive and review external reports in relation to standards/curriculum/school priorities. E.g. JARV, HIP, Ofsted.

To ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are met.

Receive reports on the impact of strategies to support pupils' personal and emotional welfare and make recommendations to the senior leadership team.

Receive reports on the impact of strategies to support staff wellbeing and make recommendations to the senior leadership team.

Receive reports on the views of stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff) of the school and will make recommendations to the senior leadership team.

Receive annual/termly reports on safeguarding and confirm and monitor actions.

3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

This role is largely delegated to the Resources Committee.

The full board will need to ratify/approve the budget after it has been approved by the Resources committee.

Ratify an up-to-date three-year financial plan submitted by the Resources Committee and approves any major changes.

Supports the completion of the Schools Financial Value Standard annually in order that the Headteacher can submit it in a timely way.

Committees

Membership and Chairing of Committees

The Headteacher will be ex officio member of all committees except the Pupil Discipline, Staff Grievance, and Appeals panel/committees.

All committees are required by the regulations to have a clerk appointed by the governing board. (This can be a governor). 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 chairperson for that meeting. Committees may invite non-governors (guests) to attend but in a non-voting capacity.

Committee/Working Parties, Voting and Quorums

Only governors including the Headteacher (where he/she remains a governor) can vote. Associate members can vote on committees

Each committee will have a quorum of **three** governors. At least two of these must be non-staff for voting purposes.

Working parties are **not** able to make decisions; they must make recommendations to FGB, who will agree or decide further action. Working parties do not have to be quorate or take minutes, but should have notes of actions that can be published.

Committee Functions

The committee will consider matters as set out in this terms of reference or as requested by the governing board, taking advice as appropriate.

Each committee will recommend the powers that should be delegated to it by the governing board. The governing board will modify and approve these powers as it sees fit and the delegated powers will then form part of the terms of reference for that committee.

Committee Procedures and Training

Committees will be reviewed at the beginning of every academic year. The membership of the committee will be determined at the first meeting of the governing board in the autumn term. Vacancies will be filled at the first available governors' meeting. The terms of reference of the committee will be reviewed at least annually.

The normal procedures, code of conduct, and regulations of the governing board also apply to its committees.

Members of the committee should take steps to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills, for example by attending appropriate training.

THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Membership: At least five governors, at least 3 should be non-staff; the staff member whose responsibility for financial matters should also attend.
Quorum: Three (at least 2 should be non-staff)
Meeting frequency: At least once every term

To fulfil the core objective below on behalf of the board.

Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

General

To support the preparation of longer-term financial plans having regard to roll projection and information from central government, the Local Authority and HfL regarding future years' budgets.

To provide guidance and assistance to the Headteacher and governing board on financial matters.

To act in accordance with the schools Financial Schedule of Delegation and the schools Financial Procedures.

Ensuring that the governing board's financial policy and actions are in accordance with legislation, other statutory requirements and the Local Authority's financial regulations

Ensure the school operates within the financial regulations and standards including Audit procedures.

Supports the completion of the Schools Financial Value Standard annually in order that the Headteacher can submit it in a timely way.

To make decisions on expenditure as per the Schedule of Financial Delegation Review/approve financial reports, virements and expenditure in line with Schedule of Financial Delegation.

To monitor expenditure of all voluntary funds held by the school.

To authorise the signing of monitoring reports to the Local Authority.

Make decisions in respect of Service Level Agreements.

Review contracts and make recommendations.

To oversee the school's procurement process.

Monitor the spending of grants e.g. Pupil Premium and Sports Premium.

To monitor and assess the impact of government funded programmes e.g. Sports Premium.

To advise the governing board on such matters as;

- Prioritising on major items of expenditure
- The purchasing of goods and services in the context of Best Value requirements
- Establish and monitor an up-to-date three year financial plan

Budget

To discuss (with the Headteacher) school's income and the budget needed to run the school in accordance with statutory requirements and the School Development Plan.

To approve the first formal budget in the financial year for the governing board to consider.

To monitor spending against budget and to ensure that expenditure remains within the prescribed limits.

Resources/Premises

Oversee arrangements including Health and Safety for the use of the school premises by outside users.

Develop and review Asset Management Plans and discuss reports presented in relation to conditions and suitability surveys. Maintenance and development of the school's premises.

Develop a strategy for buildings maintenance (including budgeting for repairs, etc.) and monitor arrangements for repairs and maintenance of major items.

The Link Governor for Health and Safety should liaise with the school's caretaker to carry out termly health and safety checks and present an annual report to the Full Governing Board.

Staffing

Report annually on the performance of teachers. This must be an item in confidential minutes. Whilst SLT may be present at this discussion, other staff members will have a conflict and should not be present.

To review the staffing structure as necessary and, at least annually, in relation to the School Development Plan.

To undertake any formal consultations on personnel matters.

Should the need arise, to draft, in consultation with staff, criteria for redundancy, for approval by the governing board.

Pay

To determine salary levels for individual posts in accordance with the Staff Pay Policy and in liaison with HT recommendations. This must be an item in confidential minutes. Whilst SLT may be present at this discussion, other staff members will have a conflict and should not be present.

To review the Headteachers' decisions on pay and performance. This must be an item in confidential minutes. Whilst SLT may be present at this discussion, other staff members will have a conflict and should not be present.

Relevant Policies, Procedures

To review, approve and monitor the implementation of relevant policies.

The clerk and the chair will maintain a rolling timetable of renewing and ratifying policies, which will be added to Finance Committee agendas as appropriate. This also includes;

- To review the school's Staff Pay Policy (with the Headteacher), including criteria relating to the use of discretionary elements for pay provisions, and to make recommendations. Review annually.
- Establish and review an Appraisal/Capability Policy for all staff and review annually.
- To review and recommend for adoption by the governing board policy/procedures for dealing with staff discipline/ grievance and whistle-blowing and ensure that the staff are informed of them.
- To recommend to the governing board staff selection policies and procedures, ensuring that they conform with safe recruitment practice and to review these procedures as necessary.
- Establish and review the school's Pupil Premium Policy, and Sports Premium policy, ensuring additional funds are used appropriately in order to 'close the gap' in educational experience and achievement.
- Health & Safety and related policies.

Panels

HT APPRAISAL PANEL

Membership: At least three governors – all trained (Staff are not permitted to be part of this panel) The Chair of Governors should be part of this panel.
Quorum: Three
Meeting frequency: At least twice a year

1. Carry out the Headteacher's annual appraisal seeking advice from an external consultant. A summary report will be presented at the next Full Governors meeting following the appraisal meeting.
2. Determine whether a pay increment is appropriate and make a recommendation to the FGB. pay rises as recommended by the Headteacher. A summary report will be presented at the next Governors meeting following a Pay Committee meeting.

STAFF GRIEVANCE/DISMISSAL PANEL

Membership: At least three governors – all trained (Staff are not permitted to be part of this panel)
Quorum: Three
Meeting frequency: When required

1. To consider staff grievances in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.
2. To consider staff dismissals in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.
3. Report broad findings to the next Full Governing Board meeting, Confidential Part Two.

APPEALS PANEL (For HR matters)

Membership: At least three governors – all trained (Staff are not permitted to be part of this panel).
Quorum: Three
Meeting frequency: When required

1. To hear appeals against decisions of the Staff Grievance Committee about staff grievances, in accordance with agreed procedures.
2. To hear appeals against decisions by the Headteacher in relation to staff discipline and dismissal.
   To make any determination or decision under the school's Complaints Policy and Procedure.
3. Report findings and outcomes to the next Full Governing Board meeting.

PUPIL DISCIPLINE/EXCLUSION PANEL

Membership: At least five governors all trained. (It is not recommended that staff are part of this panel).
Quorum: Three
Meeting frequency: When required

1. In accordance with statutory requirements and the school's relevant policies, to consider the actions of the Headteacher in excluding a pupil, to consider representations made by parents/carers, and, if appropriate, to determine whether the pupil is to be reinstated.
2. Report broad findings to the next Full Governing Board meeting.