Information for Governors on the Role of the Governing Body, the Headteacher, the Chairs and Governors:

The Governing Body

The Governing Body is legally responsible for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement.

The Governing Body should:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities are approved
- 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
- Use performance management systems, including the performance management of the Headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- Support and strengthen school leadership
- Contribute to the school's self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses
- Engage with key stakeholders
- Ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- Use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics.

Core Functions of the Governing Body

The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 set out core functions which the Governing Body must strongly focus on and retain oversight of.

1. Ensuring that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined

   It is the job of the Governing Body to:
   - Set the school’s strategic framework
   - Ensure the school has a long-term strategic vision
   - Agree the strategic priorities, aims and objectives for the school
   - Sign off the policies, plans and targets for how to achieve them
   - Check on progress and review regularly their strategic framework for the school in the light of that progress.

2. Ensuring that the Headteacher performs his or her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school

   The Governing Body is responsible for the appointment and performance management of the Headteacher. Part of their role is to support and strengthen the Headteachers’ leadership and to hold them to account for the performance of pupils and staff. This is particularly important in relation to the educational performance of the school.

3. Ensuring the sound, proper and effective use of the school’s financial resources

   The Governing Body is responsible for making sure the school’s money is well spent. They should do this by ensuring they have at least one governor with specific skills and experience of financial matters.

The Governing Body should play a strategic role and leave the running of the school to the Headteacher they have appointed. The Governing Body must not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school.

Ways of Working

- The way the Governing Body operates and organises itself should be kept under review.
- The Governing Body should consider how to use their powers to delegate functions and decisions to committees or individual governors
- The Governing Body must review the establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any committee of the governing body annually.
- The Governing Body must meet at least three times a year.
- Headteachers and Chairs should work together to ensure that meetings are well planned at appropriate intervals and that agendas are fit for purpose.
- The Governing Body must appoint a clerk to advise them on the nature of their functions and duties and ensure the governing body operates efficiently and effectively.

The Headteacher

- The Headteacher’s responsibilities include the internal organisation, management and control of the school and the educational performance of the school.
• The Headteacher will deliver the aims of the Governing Body through the day-to-day management of the school, implementation of the agreed policy framework and school improvement strategy and the delivery of the curriculum.
• It is the Headteacher’s legal duty to provide the Governing Body with all the information they need to do their job well. This means they should help the Governing Body access the data published by the DfE and Ofsted. They should also provide regularly a wide range of other management information so that the Governing Body can monitor different aspects of life in the school throughout the year.
• The Headteacher must comply with any reasonable direction of the Governing Body.
• The Headteacher is accountable to the Governing Body for the performance of all his or her responsibilities.

The Chair

• The Governing Body must appoint a Chair to lead and manage the Governing Body.
• The chair plays a crucial role in setting the culture of the governing body and is first among equals, but has no individual power.
• The Chair may make only make decisions or act on behalf of the Governing Body if:
  o The Governing Body have delegated that decision to the Chair of Governors
  o The Chair is of the opinion that a delay in exercising a function would be detrimental to the school, anyone who works at the school or any pupil at the school or their parent.
• The Chair is the principle link between the Governing Body and the Headteacher. The Headteacher and Chair should meet regularly at mutually convenient times to discuss school matters and the Chair should be a critical friend by offering support, challenge and encouragement.
• The Chair works with the clerk to set Governing Body agendas and approves draft minutes of Governing Body meetings.

The Vice-Chair

In the absence of a Chair of Governors, the Vice-Chair will take on that role.

Chairs of Committees

Chairs of committees work with the clerk to set committee meeting agendas and approve draft minutes for those meetings. They have responsibility for ensuring that if a function of the governing body has been delegated to the committee or a function of the governing body has otherwise been exercised by the committee, it is reported to the governing body.

Governors

In law the Governing Body is a corporate body, which means that no Governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the Governing Body. All Governors carry equal responsibility for decisions. If a function of the Governing Body has been delegated to an individual, the individual must report to the Governing Body in respect of any action taken or decision made.

The overriding concern of all Governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole, regardless of the route by which they were appointed and the type of Governor they are i.e. staff, parent, community, LA, foundation, co-opted.

For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, Governors must be prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously. They should:
• prepare for meetings by reading papers beforehand
• make every effort to attend meetings promptly, regularly and for the full time
• take responsibility for their own learning, training and development as a Governor

In addition they should:
• work as a member of a team at all times and be loyal to collective decisions made by the Governing Body
• recognise that all Governors have the same rights
• act in the best interests of the school at all times
• not do anything that might undermine the Governing Body's statutory requirement to promote community cohesion
• respect confidentiality
• listen to and respect the views of others
• express their own views clearly and succinctly
• declare any conflicts of interest
• take their fair share of work/positions of responsibility
• know, understand and work within the prescribed regulatory framework
• report any evidence of fraud, corruption or misconduct to an appropriate person or Authority
• adhere to the seven principles of public life (below) originally published by the Nolan Committee
• ensure that communication undertaken via social networking sites is comparable to one to one interaction, meaning that all aspects of this code of conduct are taken account of when posting information, messages, pictures or video footage on-line.