



Reigate  
Parish Church  
Primary School

## STANDING ORDERS OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF REIGATE PARISH CHURCH SCHOOL

Reigate Parish Church School is a Church of England School whose vision focuses on children being at the heart of an inclusive school where our Christian faith and Christian values support life-long learning through challenge and excitement.

The Governing Body accepts responsibility for the policies and procedures of the School and for ensuring that they are regularly reviewed in accordance with its strategic role.

The Governing Body will ensure:

- that the vision, Christian ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined
- that the Head Teacher has responsibility for the internal organisation, day-to-day management and control of the school and performs his/her responsibilities for the educational performance of the school
- the sound, proper and effective use of the school's financial resources

As a Christian school within the Diocese of Southwark, the Governing Body will:

- seek to develop effective partnerships with the Head Teacher, staff, parents, local community, local church and Diocesan Board of Education and LA;
- ensure that the school is conducted in accordance with its Christian ethos;
- welcome new governors and ensure that they have an opportunity to meet with the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors;
- seek out opportunities to praise staff and celebrate the school's achievements;
- take an interest in the welfare of all staff and pupils;
- seek appropriate advice, where necessary, before taking action;
- take its own development and training needs seriously;
- ensure that all governors are treated equally and encouraged to contribute;
- conduct its business efficiently and in accordance with the relevant regulations and guidance and any standing orders determined by the Governing Body;
- Governors will act in accordance with the following principles:
  - Selflessness* – Governors should act always in the interest of the school
  - Integrity* – Governors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships
  - Objectivity* – Governors must act and take decisions impartially and fairly using the best evidence
  - Accountability* – Governors are accountable for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this
  - Openness* – Governors should act and take decisions in a transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from publication unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.

*Honesty* – governors should be truthful

*Leadership* – Governors should actively promote and robustly support these principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs  
(Nolan principles for standards in public life – see Appendix on Page 13)

Reigate Parish Church School's Ethos Statement, as recorded in the Instrument of government, dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015, states:

“Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils”.

## **1. Composition of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body is composed of:

2 Parent Governors

1 Local Authority governor

2 Staff Governors (including the Head Teacher as an ex-officio governor)

1 Co-opted Governor

8 Foundation Governors (of whom 3 shall be a parent of a registered pupil at the school at the time of appointment)

As detailed in the Instrument of Government for the school (subject to the school's constitution under the 2012 regulations).

The term of office of a governor is four years.

## **2. Election / Appointment of Governors**

**Parent Governors** These will be elected by secret ballot of parents/carers of the registered pupils of the school.

**Staff Governors** This governor will be elected by secret ballot of all staff at the school.

**Local Authority governors** There is one place for a governor nominated by the local authority, appointed by the Governing Body.

**Foundation Governors** The foundation governors will be appointed as follows:

- 2 appointed by the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education, 1 of whom shall be a parent of a registered pupil at the school
- 5 appointed by the Parochial Church Council of St Mary's Reigate, 2 of whom shall be parents of registered pupils at the school
- 1 ex-officio governor who is the principal officiating minister of the ecclesiastical parish of St Mary Magdalene, Reigate

On joining the Governing Body and periodically thereafter, governors will complete a skills audit to identify their training and development needs. These will inform recruitment for any vacancies. The Governing body will review their goals for training and development annually at the Autumn term meeting.

### **3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Governing Body will elect from among its number a Chair and Vice-Chair.

The term of office of the Chair and Vice-Chair will be determined at the first Full Governing Body meeting of the academic year.

The process for the election of Chair and Vice-Chair is:

- governors may self-nominate or may nominate a fellow governor for Chair and/or Vice-Chair. The permission of the nominee must be sought.
- nomination forms should be submitted to the Clerk by the date agreed at a Full Governing Body meeting
- the agenda for the next meeting will list the candidates for both Chair and Vice-Chair
- the second item will be the election of the Chair
- nominees for the position of Chair may be asked to leave the room whilst the governing body takes a vote
- the Clerk will chair the meeting for the election of Chair.

The newly elected Chair will then deal with the election of Vice-Chair:

- nominees for the position of Vice-Chair may be asked to leave the room whilst the governing body takes a vote.

### **4. Chair's actions**

The Chair, or in his or her absence the Vice-Chair, has authority to take certain urgent actions if a delay in dealing with the matter would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the school, a pupil at the school or their parents, or to a member of staff at the school. Any actions taken in such circumstances must be notified to the Full Governing Body at the next meeting.

The following actions *cannot* be taken without reference to the Full Governing Body:

- matters relating to the alteration or closure of schools
- change of school category or constitution
- approval of the budget

### **5. The Clerk to the Governing Body**

The Full Governing Body must approve the appointment of the Clerk.

The Clerk's role is to:

- convene meetings
- draw up, with the Chair and Head Teacher, the agendas which must be issued together with all papers 7 days before the meeting

- ensure that minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Governing Body are drawn up and signed (subject to approval of the Governing Body) by the Chair at the next meeting
- issue minutes to the Governing Body within 2 weeks of a meeting (good practice)
- maintain a register of members of the Governing Body, and of associate members, and report vacancies to the Governing Body
- maintain a register of business interests of governors, associate members, senior leadership team and all staff.
- record attendance and any apologies tendered and accepted
- provide advice and information to the Governing Body
- chair the meeting pending the election of the Chair
- provide advice on and clerk, if available, additional meetings as required e.g. exclusions, appeals and staffing
- ensure that Part 1 signed minutes, agendas and any papers presented at a meeting are available for public inspection
- ensure that all signed minutes, agendas and any papers are held securely in school
- receive relevant correspondence
- perform such other tasks as may be determined by the Governing Body from time to time.

## **6. Committees**

When establishing committees the Governing Body should ensure that at least three governors are appointed to each committee and;

- agree the membership annually and the method of electing the Chair of each committee
- establish terms of reference, including delegation and review them annually
- allow working parties and committees to determine their own timetables within given limits

The membership of any committee of the Governing Body may include persons who are not members of the Governing Body. These members have no voting rights. However, associate members of the Governing Body, assigned to committees, have such voting rights as the Governing Body wishes to assign them.

The Head Teacher has the right to attend any meeting of the Governing Body or any of its committees or working parties subject to the statutory rules laid down in respect of exclusions, and staff disciplinary matters.

The governing body can set up committees to deal with pupil achievement, finance, premises, curriculum and any other areas of the school's work as they deem appropriate.

The governing body will review the membership and terms of reference of such committees at the first meeting in each academic year.

If appropriate, a committee will provide minutes showing its decisions and actions, which will be presented to the next meeting of the governing body for information. Where the information is deemed to be confidential, eg. Head Teacher Performance Management, hearings and appeals, the information will only be shared with those who have taken part in the process.

The Reigate Parish Church School Governing Body has the following committees:

- Children, Standards and Learning Committee
- Resources Committee
- Pay Committee
- Head Teacher's Performance Management Committee

Other committees that will be convened as needed are:

- Hearings Committee
- Appeals Committee
- Pupil Discipline Committee

Membership and terms of reference of these committees and panels are described in the committee Terms of Reference. Some committees have fixed membership and for others the membership will be appointed as and when the need for the committee arises on the basis described in the Terms of Reference.

## **7. Working Parties**

In order to ensure the most efficient use of time and resources the Governing Body can set up working parties to gather information and/or make recommendations to the Governing Body/committee. If the Governing Body establishes working parties to make recommendations or provide information they will be discontinued when their work has been completed.

## **8. Conducting Meetings**

The Chair will conduct all meetings of the Full Governing Body except where, in his or her absence, the Chair will be taken by the Vice-Chair. If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting or have resigned, the Governing Body must elect from its number a Chair for that meeting. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair resign, the Governing Body must hold a special meeting as soon as possible to elect their successors. It is the role of the Chair to ensure that governor business is conducted in an effective and efficient manner.

## **9. Calendar of meetings**

The Full Governing Body must meet at least three times a year.

Reigate Parish Church School Governing Body's committees will meet at least once a term, or more often as required.

The Governing Body will plan the dates and times of its meetings a year in advance, for publication at the end of the summer term. The aim will be to limit each meeting to two hours maximum.

## **10. Quorum**

For meetings of the Full Governing Body the quorum will be one half, rounded up to a whole number, of the complete membership of the Governing Body, excluding any vacancies.

The quorum for a committee will be three governors who are members of the committee.

A meeting may be held if it is inquorate but no votes can be taken or decisions made. If during the course of a meeting it becomes inquorate, no further decisions can be made.

#### **11. Agenda**

The agenda for all meetings will be prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Head Teacher. Individuals or groups of governors may put forward items for the agenda by writing to the Clerk at least 14 days before the meeting. Supporting papers and other documents (including the Head Teacher's report) relating to the agenda must be sent to governors with the agenda. An item raised by an individual governor, once dealt with to the Governing Body's satisfaction, should not normally be raised again within one calendar year.

#### **12. Any other business (AOB)**

AOB will not appear on any agendas although "items for the next meeting's agenda" may feature at each meeting.

#### **13. Attendance**

The Clerk will keep a record of all persons attending a meeting of the Governing body. The minutes will also record the names of governors who have sent apologies, which have been accepted, and the names of governors who are absent (or whose apologies have not been accepted). The time of arrival of any person attending the meeting late and departure of any person leaving before the end of a meeting will be recorded in the minutes. If a governor fails to attend meetings without the consent of the governing body, for a period of six months, they will be disqualified from holding office as a governor. The six month period commences from the date of the first meeting where the Governing Body does not accept the governor's apology for absence.

#### **14. Governor Discussions**

The Chair will ensure that all governors have the opportunity to express their views and that debate is not dominated by a small minority of the governors to the exclusion of others. It is the role of the Chair to ensure a smooth and efficient meeting and at times it will be necessary to draw discussions to a point that a decision can be made. Recommendations received from working parties will be recorded in the written minutes. The Governing Body will receive, but not debate, decisions that it has delegated to a committee or to an individual. Decisions will be recorded in the minutes. The Full Governing Body will not debate or discuss any matter that is likely, subsequently, to be the subject of a parental complaint or disciplinary hearing.

## **15. Decision making**

Members of the Governing Body accept that only a full meeting of the Governing Body can make decisions unless an individual or a committee has been delegated the power to deal with a specific issue. A simple majority through a show of hands will be made after full discussion and decision unless any one member, or more, requests a secret ballot. If there is a tied vote at the end of a discussion, the Chair of the meeting has a second or casting vote.

Decisions of the Governing Body may only be amended or rescinded at a subsequent meeting of the Full Governing Body when the proposal to amend or rescind appears as a separate agenda item.

A decision of the Governing Body is binding upon all its members. Any governor publicly dissociating themselves from a decision may be judged by fellow governors to:

- have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the school's ethos/religious character
- have brought the school, or may be likely to bring the school into disrepute

This could result in that governor being suspended for a period of up to six months.

The governors of Reigate Parish Church School have agreed that in exceptional circumstances, where governors are not able to be present at a Full Governing Body meeting but a wide cross section of views and opinions would aid decision making, provision will be made for alternative participation and voting. This would only be allowed by prior consent and as a last resort in an emergency situation. This must not be seen as the norm or as a regular alternative to attending a meeting.

## **16. Minutes of meetings**

The minutes of meetings will be drawn up on consecutively numbered pages. A dissenting view may be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, if that is the wish of one or more persons present.

Copies of the draft minutes, checked for accuracy by the Chair and the Head Teacher, will be sent to all members of the Governing Body within 14 days of the meeting. The minutes of a meeting will be considered for approval or amendment at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body, each page initialled by the Chair, signing them as a true record. Actions will be undertaken, by individuals or committees, based on draft minutes and need not await the approval of minutes at the next meeting.

Those matters that must by law remain confidential or which the governing body decides shall be confidential will not be published in the main minutes of any meeting but will be classified as Part 2 minutes, available to governors only.

Minutes of Full Governing Body meetings, together with the agenda, will be available for public inspection once the minutes have been approved by the full governing body and signed by the Chair. These will be available for inspection at any reasonable time, by arrangement with the school office.

## **17. Access to meetings of the governing body**

Members of the Governing Body, associate members and the Clerk are entitled to attend a meeting of the Governing Body. The Governing Body of Reigate Parish Church School have agreed to hold closed meetings.

When the Head Teacher is absent the Head Teacher's nominee may attend the meeting but does not have voting rights. Teachers and/or other staff may be invited to attend meetings of the Full Governing Body as part of his or her professional development.

The Governing Body may invite anyone to attend a meeting either regularly, or occasionally such as a teacher or representative of the Local Authority. These people are, at the Chair's discretion, welcome to take part in the discussions and to offer "expert" advice but they cannot vote or join in with decision making.

The Chair, on behalf of the Governing Body, may ask a visitor to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave when asked, that person is trespassing and the Governing Body has the right to have him or her removed. The Governing Body may exclude an associate member from any part of its meeting, which the associate member is otherwise entitled to attend, when the business under consideration concerns an individual member of staff or pupil.

## **18. Correspondence**

Significant items of correspondence will be presented to each meeting of the Governing Body, including any which the Chair has already taken urgent action on, so that the need for, and the nature of any action may be decided or confirmed.

The Governing Body will determine, by resolution, who should write letters, policy papers or discussion documents on behalf of the Governing Body. No governor should write such a letter or policy paper without the delegated authority of a committee or the full governing body.

## **19. Head Teacher's Responsibilities**

The Head Teacher's responsibilities include:

- the internal organisation, management and control of the school;
- the educational performance of the school.

The Head Teacher is accountable to the Governing Body for the performance of the school and must comply with any reasonable direction of the Governing Body. The Head Teacher has a statutory duty to keep the Governing Body fully informed and will present a written report to each termly meeting of the Full Governing Body.

Where important information required by the Governing Body is given orally, it will be recorded in the minutes in appropriate detail. Where information is required by the Governing Body but is not so readily available, reasonable time will be given for its production.

Where expertise or contribution to discussion is needed but not available within the Governing Body, the Governing Body may consider appointing an associate member from amongst pupils, staff or the community.



## **20. Public statements**

Public statements eg to the press will only be made by agreement of the Full Governing Body.

## **21. Pecuniary and personal interest**

The Governing Body will maintain a register of the pecuniary interest of its members signed by the relevant member(s). Members will also draw attention, as appropriate, to their declared pecuniary or personal interest in an agenda item at the start of each meeting of the Full Governing Body.

A governor will be required to withdraw from a meeting, if he or she (or a relative, to the knowledge of the relevant person):

- Stands to gain financially from a matter under consideration
- Has a personal interest in a matter under consideration
- Is a relative of a pupil, a parent or an employee being discussed.

Governors who have declared a personal interest must be allowed to attend a meeting of a committee or the Governing Body to give evidence, if they have made an accusation or are witnesses in the case that is under discussion.

## **22. Parental Concerns**

The Governing Body will approve a Parental Concerns policy.

## **23. Staff Grievance and Discipline**

The Governing Body will approve procedures for dealing with staff disciplinary matters and staff grievances.

## **24. Review**

Amendments to these Standing Orders may be made only by the Governing Body. They will be reviewed annually, along with the Terms of Reference of the committees, at the first Full Governing Body meeting of the academic year

## **25. Distribution**

The Standing Orders will be made available to each member of the Governing Body, new governors when they join and the Clerk. An additional copy will be filed as part of the record of the meeting at which they are agreed or amended. Once agreed the chair should sign and date the last page and initial those preceding.

These Standing Orders were approved at the Full Governing Body meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

For governing bodies to carry out their role effectively, governors must be:

- Prepared and equipped to take their responsibilities seriously;
- Acknowledged as the accountable body by the lead professionals;
- Supported by the appropriate authorities in that task; and
- Willing and able to monitor and review their own performance.

### **The role of a governor**

In law the governing body is a corporate body, which means:

- no governor can act on her/his own without proper authority from the full governing body;
- all governors carry equal responsibility for decisions made, and
- Although appointed through different routes (i.e. parents, staff, Local Authority, foundation), the overriding concern of all governors has to be the welfare of the school as a whole.

### **Understanding**

- We understand the purpose of the governing body and the role of the head teacher as set out above
- We are aware of and accept the Nolan seven principles of public life: see appendix
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the governing body has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing body when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We have a duty to act fairly and without prejudice, and in so far as we have responsibility for staff, we will fulfil all that is expected of a good employer.
- We will encourage open government and will act appropriately.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the governing body or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing body meeting.
- We will consider carefully how our decisions may affect the community and other schools.

- We will always be mindful of our responsibility to maintain and develop the Christian ethos and reputation of our school. Our actions within the school and the local community will reflect this.
- In making or responding to criticism or complaints affecting the school we will follow the procedures established by the governing body.

### **Commitment**

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We will each involve ourselves actively in the work of the governing body, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees, working parties or groups.
- We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance in full why we are unable to.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- Our visits to school will be arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the governing body and agreed with the Head Teacher.
- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training
- We are committed to actively supporting and challenging the Head Teacher
- We accept that in compliance with statutory regulation, our names, terms of office, roles within the governing body, category of governor and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school website
- Each year we will complete a skills audit to identify training requirements of the Governing Body and each commit to undertake the relevant training to increase the skill set of the Governing Body.

### **Relationships**

- We will strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted.
- We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with other governors.
- We will support the chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct both at meetings and at all times.

- We are prepared to answer queries from other governors in relation to delegated functions and take into account any concerns expressed, and we will acknowledge the time, effort and skills that have been committed to the delegated function by those involved.
- We will seek to develop effective working relationships with the Head Teacher, staff and parents, the local authority and other relevant agencies and the community.

### **Confidentiality**

- We will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school
- We will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.
- We will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.

### **Conflicts of interest**

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest that we have in connection with the governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests.
- We will declare any pecuniary interest - or a personal interest which could be perceived as a conflict of interest - in a matter under discussion at a meeting and offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time.

### **Breach of this code of practice**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the governing body should only use suspension as a last resort after seeking to resolve any difficulties or disputes in more constructive ways;
- Should it be the chair that we believe has breached this code, another governor, such as the vice chair will investigate;
- We understand that any allegation of a material breach of this code of practice by any governor shall be raised at a meeting of the governing body, and, if agreed to be substantiated by a majority of governors, shall be minuted and can lead to consideration of suspension from the governing body.
- We are aware of the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the School Governance (Procedures) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended, which pertain to the grounds for suspension as a school governor,

Schedule 6 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007 and Schedule 4 of the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, relating to the disqualifications from the role of school governor (held as a separate document)

**Undertaking:**

As a member of the Governing Body I will always have the well-being of the children and the reputation of Reigate Parish Church School at heart; I will do all I can to be an ambassador for the school, publicly supporting its aims, values and Christian ethos; I will never say or do anything publicly that would embarrass the school, the Governing Body, the Head Teacher or staff.

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