

Highcliffe School Board of Governors Scheme of Delegation

1. Introduction

This document describes the Governors' committee structure in use at Highcliffe School. This structure was adopted by the Board following a Committee Structure Review held in February 2016 and was reviewed again in the Spring Term of 2022. The annual review will consider areas of strength and ineffectiveness, changes in governor personnel and skills, and will take governors' personal aspirations and preferred ways of working into account. Information gathered in the process will be used to make adjustments to the board structure and practices and realignment of governors with different functions. The board actively encourages governors to invest in their personal growth and to seek role rotation opportunities.

2. Core Responsibilities of the Governing Board

The formation of committees is closely coupled to the purposes and business of the Governing Board, as the committees form the mechanism by which the work is divided up and carried out. They allow us to make best use of our people by allowing small groups to focus on specific areas, while maintaining accountability to the wider group. How we structure should be a reflection of the work that needs to be done and the concentration of skills available to do it. It is important, therefore, to establish a clear mapping between the corporate responsibilities and the mechanisms by which they are carried out.

- Strategic leadership
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Governing body structure and effectiveness
- Long-term planning (including succession planning)
- Assure rigour of assessment
- Ensure adequate whistleblowing and complaint handling arrangements
- Use data to challenge and self-evaluate
- Support the headteacher
- Promote tolerance and respect
- Engage with key stakeholders
- Be transparent and accountable:
 - recruitment of staff
 - governance structures
 - attendance at meetings
 - parent/carer contact
 - etc
- Arrange and carry out school visits
- Give an account of governance to Ofsted Inspections
- Monitor performance management systems and pay progression
- Promote high standards of educational achievement
- Hold the headteacher to account for educational performance and performance management
- Hold school leaders to account for progress

- Provide SEND oversight
- Provide Safeguarding oversight
- Support school self-evaluation
- Understand and take account of pupil data
- Assess the impact of teaching on student learning and progress
- Use pupil premium to tackle barriers to learning
- Ensure solvency and probity and effective management of financial resources
- Oversee financial performance
- Act as an admissions authority
- Employ staff
- Provide Health & Safety oversight
- Plan using resources such as the "Need to Know" timeline
- Provide governor support and training

This document is intended to act as a Master View that maps Board responsibilities to committee and Full Governing Body activities / outputs.

3. Governing Board Structure

The structure aims to align all governance duties clearly with an area of ownership, and to allow governors to keep focused on maintaining strategic oversight (the role of the Board) rather than straying into school management (the role of Senior Leadership Team).

In line with School Governance regulations, meeting agendas are to be published fourteen clear days in advance along with all meeting materials – including notice, agenda, reports and papers to be considered. This is necessary to give opportunity for governors to conduct independent research, give weighted consideration to matters requiring a decision, and raise questions in advance. This timeline reflects the strategic level of the topics that should be discussed and implies that any topic requiring up-to-the-minute reports is probably managerial in nature rather than strategic. A shorter period may be deemed appropriate by the chair in rare cases of emergency.

It is the aim of the board to conduct meetings efficiently and in a manner that is focused on the strategic agenda. Committees should aim to create short-term working parties to focus on specific matters and to facilitate governor learning.

3.1. Committees

Resources Committee

Meets twice per term during term time and provides oversight of the school's use of resources, i.e. HR, finance, facilities, contracts, etc. Responsible for ensuring budgets are set and adhered to. Advises other governors and committees on budget limits. Also admissions, health & safety, audit, compliance and benchmarking.

School Progress Committee

Meets four times per annum during term time to set targets and monitor performance. Oversees and supports School Development Plan and school self-assessment. Oversight of SEND, Safeguarding, LAC and Pupil Premium provision. Uses data to assess results and hold senior staff to account.

The full board has delegated authority to the committees to make decisions and take actions as defined in their terms of reference. To ensure transparency and accountability, Committee chairs are required to report all decisions made and actions taken at the next Full Board meeting. In addition, committees are required to conduct an annual self-assessment of their make-up and effectiveness to feed into the Full Board's self-evaluation and committee structure review.

3.2. Full Board

In support of the committee work and as an overarching structure, the Full Board has the following responsibilities:

- Strategic leadership
- Clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Governing body structure and effectiveness
- Assure rigour of assessment
- Use of external consultation to inform strategy
- Annual self-evaluation and action plans
- Annual approval of a written Scheme of Delegation
- Formally approving the annual budget for submission to the ESFA
- Keeping an up-to-date Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests for all Governors and Senior School Staff.
- Appointment of External Auditors (following recommendation from Resources Committee)
- Approval of audited financial statements prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

3.3. Annual Cycle - Key Areas of Governing Board Focus

End of Summer Term	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Start of Summer Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee structure review • Planning for the next academic year • Agree reporting expectations of senior staff for Autumn Term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair + Vice Chair elections • Governor rotation • Headteacher's report • Review performance from previous academic year • Set new performance targets • Agree reporting expectations of senior staff for Spring Term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviews • Headteacher's report • Progress checks and feedback • Agree reporting expectations of senior staff for Summer Term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation of committees and full board + action plans • Headteacher's report

3.4. Link Governor Roles

Link Governors perform a special role in collecting intelligence about the school's performance and approach in a specific area of interest to the governing body. Their aim is to work in partnership with staff and students to deepen understanding of their area of interest and to improve capacity to support the school in achieving its aims. The information is primarily obtained through pre-arranged school visits (known as learning walks) that are undertaken up to three times per school year. Other sources of information are reports produced by the school staff and external sources such as ALPS, National Governance Association (NGA) etc. Link Governors are required to report their findings along with any recommendations to a committee or to the full board.

Unless otherwise stated, all link roles require a commitment of 3 half days during school hours each year, plus own-time research and report writing. While each role is primarily accountable to a single committee, the role holder should be conscious of impacts elsewhere. For example, a Link Governor accountable to the School Progress Committee may spot opportunities for funds and other resources to be put to better use and report these findings to the Resources Committee.

Link Governors are asked to remember to include discussions with students on the

agenda for their visits. Students should be carefully selected to be representative of all groups relevant to the visit, and the governor should use available school data to choose suitable candidates. In the interests of good governance, student selection should not be made by school staff, though it is quite acceptable to seek advice from the key contact for the visit.

Link Governor roles are available to non-staff governors only and a two-year commitment will be sought from those taking the role. An option to swap may be offered after one year provided that a replacement can be found.

Link area	Role Description and Key School Contact	Reports to
Safeguarding	Responsible for oversight of the School's provision for Safeguarding. Should conduct (at minimum) an annual review of the School's procedures, practices and progress. Key contact: Designated Safeguarding Lead (also SENCo, Head of Sixth Form, HoA's, Pastoral Leads as required)	Full Board
Behaviour, Welfare and Attendance	Responsible for oversight of the School's approach and management of performance, welfare and attendance matters. Key contact: Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour, Welfare & Attendance (also Attendance Officer, SENCo, Head of Sixth, HoA's, Pastoral Leads as required)	School Progress Committee
Learning, Teaching and Assessment	Responsible for overseeing the School's approach and progress in raising standards of learning, teaching and assessment across all subjects and year groups. Key contact: Assistant Headteacher for Learning and Teaching (also SCL's/directors of learning, CL's/assistant directors of learning, lead practitioners, teaching staff as required)	School Progress Committee
Maths and English	Responsible for overseeing the School's approach and management of raising standards of attainment and progress in Maths and English at KS3 and KS4. Key contact: Raising Standards Leader (also Head of English and Maths; teaching staff as required)	School Progress Committee
Vulnerable Students	Responsible for oversight of the School's provision for Looked After Children, Pupil Premium and SEND. Should conduct (at minimum) an annual review of the School's procedures, practices and progress. Key contact: Raising Standards Leader (also SENCo, Main School Leader, Head of Sixth Form, HoA's, Pastoral Leads as required)	School Progress Committee
Sixth Form	Responsible for overseeing all aspects of the management of the School's Sixth Form provision. Efficiency and effectiveness of staffing structure, evaluating progress against 6 th Form development plan, recruitment and retention, admissions/demand and financial viability, destinations for students. Key contact: Head of Sixth Form (also Head of Y13, Head of Y12, other sixth form staff as required)	Full Board

Link area	Role Description and Key School Contact	Reports to
Finance and Resources	Responsible for regular and in-depth scrutiny of the School's monthly financial reporting to management and governors. Key contact: Director of Business and Finance (also Site manager, network manager, operations manager, HR leads, Admissions officer, communications officer as required)	Resources Committee
Health and Safety	Responsible for ensuring the school manages its Health and Safety requirements effectively. Key contact: Director of Business and Finance, Site Manager	Resources Committee
Mental Health and Wellbeing	Responsible for supporting the school to embed its mental health and wellbeing provision across the entire school.	Full Board

Committee Terms of Reference

4.1. Resources Committee Terms of Reference

Membership: 5 or more Governors, Patrick Earnshaw (Headteacher), Simon Fuller (Director of Business and Finance)

Chair: Mr Neil Sykes [The Chair must be a non-Staff Governor elected by the committee annually]

Frequency: Six times per year (twice per term) during term time

Quorum: 3 Non-Staff Governors

Minutes: Taken by the Clerk or a pre-agreed member of the Committee.

Reporting: Summary report to each Full Governing Body meeting advising on powers exercised, progress to plan, issues encountered, and cross-committee impacts

Functions and Delegated Authority:

- Ensure solvency and probity and effective management of financial resources
- Oversee financial performance
- Act as an admissions authority
- Employ staff
- Provide Health & Safety oversight
- Long-term planning (including succession planning)
- Assure rigour of assessment
- Audit
- Budget monitoring
- Spend monitoring
- Assess financial controls
- Monitor returns on investment (hard and soft measures)
- Compliance assessment
- Benchmarking against other similar schools

- Plan using resources such as the "Need to Know" timeline
- Provide committee member support and training
- Further financial responsibilities – please refer to the Financial Scheme of Delegation Document.

Possible Sub-committees:

- Admissions Panel
- Personnel
- Pay Review

4.2. School Progress Committee Terms of Reference

Membership: 5 or more Governors, Patrick Earnshaw (Headteacher), Mat Downs (Assistant Headteacher)

Chair: Mr Simon Welch [A non-Staff Governor elected by the committee annually]

Frequency: 4 times per year (twice in Autumn term, once in Spring term and once in Summer term) during term time

Quorum: 3 Non-Staff Governors

Minutes: Taken by the Clerk or a pre-agreed member of the Committee.

Reporting: Summary report to each Full Governing Body meeting advising on powers exercised, progress to plan, issues encountered, and cross-committee impacts

Functions and Delegated Authority:

- Monitor performance management systems and pay progression (in partnership with the Resources Committee)
- Promote high standards of educational achievement
- Hold the Headteacher to account for educational performance and performance management
- Hold school leaders to account for progress
- Provide SEND oversight
- Provide Safeguarding oversight
- Support school self-evaluation
- Understand and take account of pupil attainment and progress data
- Assess the impact of teaching on student learning and progress
- Use pupil premium to tackle barriers to learning
- Curriculum planning
- Long-term planning (including succession planning)
- Assure rigour of assessment
- Evaluation and monitoring (use of external data, visits, Ofsted reports, school self-evaluation)
- Oversight of School Development Plan
- Progress checks
- Monitoring of behaviour, attendance, safety, attainment, progress
- Oversight of teaching quality and staff development
- Set headteacher targets and evaluate progress
- Hold the headteacher to account for financial probity and efficiency

- Plan using resources such as the "Need to Know" timeline
- Provide committee member support and training

Possible Sub-committees:

- Headteacher's Performance Management Review

4.3. Full Governing Board

Membership: All Governors

Chair: A Non-Staff Governor elected by the board annually

Frequency: 1-2 meetings per term

Quorum: One third of Governors holding office (minimum of 3)

Minutes: Taken by the Clerk

- Strategic leadership
- Clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Governing body structure and effectiveness
- Long-term planning (including succession planning)
- Assure rigour of assessment
- Ensure there is adequate scrutiny of pupil performance, governance standards and safety through the Board/committee structure
- Ensure adequate whistleblowing and complaint handling arrangements
- Set the strategic direction, taking into account local aspirations, student voice, parent voice, the governance structure, national standards, improvements and priorities
- Conduct an annual self-evaluation:
 - clarity of role and purpose
 - make-up of the board (members, skills, special roles)
 - ways of working
- Agree action plans (feeds into committee plans):
 - targets
 - strategies
 - resourcing
- Use data to challenge and self-evaluate
- Support the headteacher
- Promote tolerance and respect
- Engage with key stakeholders
- Be transparent and accountable in:
 - recruitment of staff
 - governance structures
 - attendance at meetings
 - parent/carer contact
 - etc
- Arrange and carry out school visits
- Give an account of governance to Ofsted Inspections
- Plan using resources such as the "Need to Know" timeline
- Provide governor support and training

Other Functions

- Disciplinary Panels
- Complaints Handling

4.4. The role of 'Members' on the governing board

Members have a limited and distinct role which should avoid duplicating the role of the trust board or assuming the role of the trustees (governors). The role of members in the running of the trust is minimal and one of oversight. They are the equivalent of shareholders in a commercial company. There must be clear separation between members and trustees save for the Chair of Governors (as defined in the school's Articles of Association).

Members' business is conducted at Members' meetings (which are 'General Meetings'), or by written resolution. Typically, Members will only meet once a year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) that usually takes place in Autumn Term. Members also meet annually in December to review the submitted annual Report and Accounts.

Members statutory rights:

- The right to remove Trustees
- The right to amend the Articles of Association
- The right to receive the annual accounts
- The right to appoint the auditors

Members rights under the articles:

- The appointment of Trustees
- The appointment and removal of Members
- ensuring the success of the trust,

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Review Annually in September unless a change is required in-year.