

Nursery Hill Primary School

Ansley Common

Nuneaton



Governing Body  
Succession Planning Policy

Written February 2017

Adopted March 2017

Next Review March 2019

## 1 Introduction

This document has been prepared to outline what is expected from a Governor at Nursery Hill Primary School, including reasonable minimum levels of commitment. This ensures that there is an even spread of workload within the Governing Body, that skills and experience are not just gained by a few key individuals, but are spread throughout the whole Governing Body. It outlines terms of office and the rotation policy for responsibilities, again ensuring that interests, expertise, experience and skills are distributed throughout the Governing Body to good effect and succession planning is in place.

Adhering to this policy will ensure that the governing body of Nursery Hill Primary School is equipped for the future; it also ensures that individuals do not feel burdened with responsibility and that we have a group of people who are willing and able to perform key roles.

## 2. Principles

### 2.1 High expectations

We expect all Governors to be involved in and contribute effectively to the regular business of the Governing Body and the life of the school. Governance is a voluntary role and we realise that Governors have different availability as home and work responsibilities make different demands on people.

However the Governing Body sets and safeguards a school vision, ethos of high expectations of everyone within the school community. This includes high expectations for the behaviour, progress and attainment of all pupils in the school, and for the conduct and professionalism of both staff and Governors. The extensive and important responsibilities of Governors need to be executed with commitment and a professional approach, being accountable to stakeholders for *'conducting the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school'*.

*(Further information on the expectation for conduct of Governors can be found in the Governors Code of Conduct Appendix 2) Also refer to A Competency Framework for Governance DofE January 2017*

Governors need to be fully aware of the Strategic Leadership, Accountability, People, Structure, Compliance and Evaluation Process of the school.

Therefore our usual minimum expectation of involvement for all Governors to ensure that the workload, knowledge and expertise of the governing body is distributed among its members is to:

- Attend five out of the six full governing body meetings per year.
- Be an active member of a subcommittee.
- Be a member of the Discipline/Appeals Committee (ad hoc committee meets rarely) (staff governors are not required to serve on this)
- Responsibility as a link governor for one area of the Learning Improvement Plan.
- Be prepared to access relevant, convenient training.
- Submit to clerk report on your individual responsibility before each meeting.
- Undertake appraisals to review your own performance.

We also recognise that there can be a tendency for a lot of responsibility to fall onto a few Governors and this can stilt the development of Governors and their leadership skills and restricts the distribution of knowledge, responsibility and involvement.

So we suggest the following as a *maximum* level of responsibility in addition to those above, so that there is not too great a burden on any individuals.

- Responsibility for one of the following key roles: Chair of Governors, Chair of a committee, Clerk. Note that staff members will not perform any of these key roles.

- Member of an additional committee in a non-key role. (A governor can be the chair of one committee and a member of the other one.)
- A governor can additionally be a Chair or member of the Pay Committee
- Responsibility as link governor for no more than three areas, including Head Teacher Appraisal responsibility. Apart from the chair

## 2.2 Terms of office

In order to have a rotation of responsibility and to try to ensure development of future key role holders to establish a succession plan the following are the expected *maximum* terms of office for key roles within the governing body, there is no enforced minimum:

- Chair of Governors 3 Years
- Vice Chair of Governors 3 Years
- Chair of Committee 3 Years
- Health and Safety governor 3 years
- Subject Link Governor as per LIP
- Head Teacher Appraisal Governor 3 Years - three members are recommended.

The Clerk to monitor when the term of office is due to expire, and should make this known at the preceding full governing body meeting. Governors may if they wish, take on another similar key role. For example, the Chair of one committee may become the chair of another Committee and link Governors would be able to take responsibility for a different subject.

Ideally, a Vice Chair should consider their role as preparation for Chairing and should be prepared to seriously consider volunteering for a role of Chair as it becomes available.

A role may be resumed with a minimum of a 1 year gap. Elections should be by secret ballot.

## 2.3 Rotation policy

It is the intention that during the standard four year term of office for a Governor, each Governor is a member of each committee for at least one academic year. The rotation will occur at the autumn term full Governing Body meeting where committee membership is arranged. This meeting will also review the durations served for the key roles and make changes where either maximum terms of office have been reached, or sooner if the individual wishes to step down.

Positions will be elected as per the current standard practice,

- Chair of Governors on an annual basis by nomination and secret ballot.
- Vice Chair of Governors on an annual basis by nomination and secret ballot.
- Chair of Committees, by nomination and election.
- Link governor, by volunteering for the role. When there is more than one volunteer the role can be shared, but every effort must be made to represent all areas.
- Key roles, other than Chair's are welcome to work with a deputy to develop leadership skills and aid succession planning.
- Additional, specific training is available and recommended for some roles.

Appendix1 gives information on some of the specific roles for Governors.

If volunteers are not forthcoming the Chair can appoint to spread the workload.

## Appendix 1 Governor Roles

### a) Chair of the Governing Body

Except for having the casting vote in a tied vote decision and having delegated power to take urgent action on behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair has no more power than any other individual Governor, however, it is an influential leadership role and they must use their influence wisely.

They are responsible for ensuring the Governing Body fulfils all its functions well, driving the strategic direction of the school.

Effective leadership of the Governing Body involves working towards a shared vision for school improvement which all Governors help to achieve, working together to share responsibility and workload, and the adoption of effective working practices which enable everyone to participate and develop leadership skills.

The role of the Chair is to

- Lead and develop the team of Governors
- Build the relationship with the Head Teacher and ensure accountability
- Lead strategically with a focus on school improvement
- Lead the business of the Governing Body
- Be an advocate for the school
- Know how the school performs, and why, and understand its development priorities;
- work in partnership with the professionals, whilst recognising the need for accountability and that there should be challenge - on both sides;
- Be well organised;
- Delegate effectively and hold others to account
- Show leadership by supporting and encouraging the development of the skills of other Governors, to pave the way for succession and ensure change and reinvigoration within the Governing Body;
- Work with the Head Teacher and Clerk to manage the work of the Governing Body or committee;
- Ensure compliance with statute;
- Have an understanding of wider educational issues and policy that require discussion and/or a decision;
- Consider and approve the agenda for the meetings and ensure minutes are recorded accurately;
- Conduct meetings effectively and encourage full participation by members while completing business in a timely fashion;
- Occasionally act on behalf of the Governing Body, or a committee, in dealings with other people, groups or agencies;
- Meet with the Head Teacher regularly, or communicate effectively by some other means, in order to keep up-to-date with issues affecting the school;
- Provide the Head Teacher with an opportunity to raise matters that cannot, initially, be discussed elsewhere;
- Take 'urgent action' on behalf of the Governing Body occasionally, in specific circumstances, and report this to the Governing Body as soon as possible;
- Undertake the tasks that the law assigns specifically to the Chair;
- Ensure governors and staff feel valued;
- Create a team spirit whilst dealing with any inappropriate comment or behaviour;
- Monitor the Governing Body's workload and give a clear lead in evaluating its effectiveness;
- Ensure the Governing Body is equipped to recruit senior leaders

- Ensure that succession planning takes place.
- Lead individuals from different backgrounds, representations and, potentially, varying degrees of ability;
- Build strong working relationships, both within the Governing Body and with the school's professionals and with other stakeholders;
- Ensure that the Governing Body fulfils all its responsibilities;
- Gain knowledge of relevant statute and educational issues, particularly of school and pupil performance;
- To see the wider picture, and ensure the Governing Body think strategically;
- Ensure the senior leaders have the external support they need to do their job well e.g. HR, legal and resources advice etc.
- Holds non-attendance to account.
- Has courageous conversations with Governors who are not contributing positively to the team.

#### **b) Vice Chair of the Governing Body**

- To support the Chair of the Governing Body in fulfilling the duties listed above
- To take responsibility, and have accountability, for those items delegated to them.
- To deputise for the Chair of the Governing Body as required
- To prepare for future role and responsibility

#### **c) The role of the Committee Chair**

A Chair of Committee needs to be forward thinking, planning ahead for upcoming and ongoing business, and needs to look retrospectively to reflect on completed business and identify ongoing issues.

##### **A Chair of a Committee:**

- Seeks to understand the remit, delegated powers and terms of reference for the committee, and convey these to others so that they are known and understood by all members.
- Identifies action that the Committee should take in relation to items delegated to the Committee and to fulfil its legal obligations.
- Identifies a timetable and programme of actions the Committee is responsible for and ensures that that timetable (including meetings and policy reviews) fits logically with the school calendar and is syncopated to the actions and programme of the full Governing Body, other Committees and is compatible with external requirements.
- Ensures that the business of the Committee is conducted properly; that meetings are effectively planned and chaired; agendas are drawn up and circulated, with well-prepared supporting papers, in a timely manner; that accurate minutes are produced and published promptly; that follow-up activity is completed as agreed (holding others to account for delegated items); that on-going issues are progressing and are pursued to a conclusion and that the outcomes are recorded.
- Directs the business and discussion of the Committee to ensure that Governors undertake their strategic purpose
- Ensures that the Committee is effectively led, promoting good working relationships within the Committee, recognising and utilising individual strengths, encouraging equal participation and delegating effectively.

- Encourages development of Committee members' knowledge and understanding, including through training
- Understands the Committees work and actions within the context of the overarching work of the Governing Body
- Reports to the full Governing Body on matters arising from the Committee meetings, highlighting items that need action or noting by the full governing body.
- Works with the Chair of Governors, other Committee Chairs and the Head Teacher to ensure coherence in the management of the Governing Body and the school
- Co-ordinates the Committees contribution to whole school issues (e.g Vision Statement/Development Plan/ Monitoring activities/policies/ publications and website.)
- Hold to account any non-attendance

If the Chair cannot make a meeting they will appoint on an ad hoc basis another member of the Committee (this will increase opportunities for personal growth and development.)

## **Responsibilities**

### **New Governor Induction - Chair and Clerk**

- Acts as or identifies another Governor as a "mentor" to support new Governors.
- Induction pack of materials will familiarise new Governors with the school and the Governing Body and ensures that this and the induction policy is frequently updated and regularly reviewed to ensure information remains relevant and accurate
- New Governors to undertake induction training and advise Clerk upon completion during first term of office.
- Identifies new Governors' interests/knowledge/skills and uses this information so that the Governing Body benefits from relevant appointments to roles and committees.
- Be available as a point of contact for new Governors if they have concerns
- Contacts new Governors to evaluate the experience of their first year in office, so that lessons can be learned and induction procedures further developed.

### **Training**

All Governors to undertake to attend an induction course during the first term of office  
Be prepared to undertake further training as needed,

### **Governor with responsibility for promotion and arranging training**

- Ensure that Governors are aware of training opportunities e.g E-learning, LEA provision, The Governor Learning and Development Service other providers, through courses, publications and relevant websites.
- Ensure Governors to undertake relevant training
- Tries to keep abreast of new initiatives/developments
- Identifies and find solutions to current and anticipated training needs
- Co-ordinates and facilitates a Governing Body training programme that takes into account the changing needs of individual Governors, groups of Governors and the whole Governing Body
- If appropriate work with Governor Services in co-ordinating school-based courses for the Governing Body

- Establishes links with other local governing bodies to support Governor Development
- **Ensure that:**
- The Clerk regularly undertakes an audit of Governors skills, knowledge and experience and identifies growth and gaps
- The Clerk to maintain a training record
- **Reporting to the Governing Body**
- Report each full Governing Body meeting on training attended, planned and recommended
- Help individual Governors to report to the Governing Body on training courses attended and evaluate the benefit.
- Evaluate the cost-benefit of the training received as necessary

When appropriate.

#### **Networking/ Strategic Development of LEA Training Provision and PATCH Meetings**

- Makes Governor Services aware of the views and requirements of the Governing Body in relation to governor development issues
- Work with the Governor Services training team to shape the future of governor training so that it accurately reflects what governors need
- Attends meetings/briefing and information sessions for Training Governors or identifies a colleague to do so and report back to the governing body

#### **Governor with responsibility for Head Teacher Appraisal**

(appointed to manage the processes concerned with the Head Teacher's appraisal)

- With the support of the External Advisor: (EA)
- Undertakes training to understand their responsibilities and gain confidence in carrying them out
- Reviews the Head Teacher's progress against previous objectives and overall performance
- Confirms actions and agree changes arising from in-year monitoring if necessary
- Recognises and praises the achievements of the Head Teacher and the school
- Identifies areas for professional development and training
- Ensures that new objectives with success criteria and monitoring arrangements are agreed and recorded
- Ensures that records are made of the Head Teacher's review and that copies are distributed to the Head Teacher and the chair of governors (or nominated governor) and they are kept confidential as appropriate

#### **Before the Annual Review Meeting:**

- Ensures the EA is provided with the necessary documentation, in consultation with the Head Teacher and the EA
- Reads and considers the EA's preliminary advice
- Ensures monitoring arrangements for current objectives have taken place and gathers evidence on the results.
- Ensures they understand pupil performance data, current priorities in the school improvement plan and emerging priorities to inform objectives for the Head Teacher
- When necessary has a pre-meeting with the EA to prepare for the formal session
- Reaches agreement with the EA and the Head Teacher on the agenda for the meeting, chairing and production of minutes/documentation.

**At the Meeting:**

- Considers the EA's suggestions for the Head Teacher's objectives
- Considers any issues arising from the current objectives and their monitoring
- Ensures that a fair and evidence-based decision is reached about the satisfactory achievement of the Head Teacher's current year objectives
- Seeks agreement with the Head Teacher on new objectives, ensuring that they are linked to pupil progress, school development priorities and Head Teacher Professional standards and take into account continuing professional development requirements and Home/School life balance.
- Takes into consideration the advice offered by the EA
- Ensures that objectives are relevant and realistic, unambiguously stated and measurable, indicating milestones and monitoring procedures

**After the Meeting:**

- Records the review and gives a copy to the Head Teacher and the chair of governors.
- Ensures implementation of a programme to monitor and review progress towards the new objectives.
- Contributes to the annual review of the governing body's Staff Appraisal policy

**Health and Safety with Premises**

- Works with the school health and safety representative to ensure that the school has a health and safety policy
- Considers appropriate health and safety procedures and practices to be undertaken by the school
- Contributes to the Emergency Plan
- Checks Risk Assessments are undertaken (including for off-site visits)
- Works with the school's health and safety representative to make regular health and safety inspections of the school premises
- Keeps the governing body informed of health and safety issues
- Keeps informed by reading new materials and information relating to health and safety matters received into the school or published in educational health and safety publications
- Attends appropriate Local Authority (LA) training where appropriate
- Ensures logs ( e.g. Accident, Fire Procedures etc.,) are kept and reviewed
- Submit report to clerk before each Full Governors Meeting

**LIP Link Governors**

- Gain an understanding of the subject/issue/area and be aware of any relevant policy in place
- Develop an effective working relationship with the co-ordinator/relevant staff and meet on a regular basis
- Attend relevant governor courses – if possible together with the co-ordinator
- Attend relevant Staff meetings/INSET etc.
- Contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the subject
- Be aware of the resources allocated to the subject from the school budget
- Take part in monitoring activities

- Contribute as appropriate to updating and reviewing relevant policy
- Bear in mind this area when considering data; governor discussions; related business.
- Take opportunities to visit school and become familiar with the policy in action/those directly affected.
- Record visits and report to Governing Body
- Be prepared to report to Governors/stakeholders/OFSTED/ on current situation relating to the issue/area/subject
- Be aware of external support/initiatives related to the subject
- Access topic-specific background materials
- Endeavour to keep abreast of developments related to the area
- Submit report to clerk before each Full Governors Meeting

### **Governor with responsibility for Special Needs**

The main function of the SEN governor is to keep the Governing Body informed about the way the school manages its provision for SEN, so that the governing body can fulfil its legal responsibility'

#### **The SEN governor should:**

- Understand how the school identifies children with SEN and what happens once a child has been identified
- Gather information about the number of pupils with SEN and the range of need always ensuring confidentiality of information
- Support the SENCO by arranging regular meetings – these do not need to be formal
- Report regularly to the governing body
- Visit the school to see how the SEN programme is delivered
- Meet with the SENCO and other staff to ensure that the necessary resources are in place
- Ensure that you are familiar with the school's SEN policy, it is up-to-date and reviewed on an annual basis
- Ensure that the school complies fully with the SEN Code of Practice.
- Attend training courses and other meetings for SEN Governors
- Keep up-to-date about new regulations and proposals
- Submit report to clerk before each Full Governors Meeting

### **Governor with responsibility for Complaints (The Chair)**

- To ensure that the Governing Body has a complaints policy and procedure which is fit for purpose and is regularly reviewed
- To ensure the current complaints policy and procedures are easily available to parents etc., including on the website as appropriate
- To be familiar with the school's complaints policy and procedures and ensure that the Governing Body is aware of its responsibilities
- To ensure that the Chair of Governors. Understands their role in the school's complaints procedure
- To ensure that the Governing Body has either established a complaints committee or has nominated three to five Governors to be members of a complaints committee as required
- To ensure that the Governing Body complaints committee members have received complaints training

- To co-ordinate the school's responses to complaints and ensure that the Governing Body implements the school's complaints policy and procedures effectively
- To ensure that the appropriate documentation is completed and held in relation to complaints received by the Chair of Governors or Head Teacher
- To encourage the Governing Body to view complaints in a positive way.
- To undertake relevant training
- Submit report to clerk before each Full Governors Meeting

#### **Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding/Child Protection**

- To work with the school's Senior Designated Person for child protection to gain a better understanding and knowledge of the school's child protection procedures and monitor the effectiveness of those procedures for keeping children safe including recording and reporting of concerns
- To ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed/agreed by the Governing Body as prescribed in the GB policy review programme
- To work in collaboration with the school's SEN Governor
- To support and assist the Governing Body to have a better understanding and knowledge of child protection issues
- To undertake relevant training e.g. LA Child Protection/ Safeguarding courses, including the Safeguarding Training for Governors course ;Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) training; School based INSET days – child protection topics; web-based training
- To keep informed by reading new materials that are received into school, for example the WSCB quarterly newsletter, or published in educational publications or on the WSCB website.
- Submit report to clerk before each Full Governors Meeting.

## **Appendix 2**

The Governing Body has the following core strategic functions:

#### **Establishing the strategic direction, by:**

- Setting the vision, values, and objectives for the school
- Agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

#### **Ensuring accountability, by:**

- Appointing the Head Teacher
- Monitoring progress towards targets
- Appraisal of the Head Teacher
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to school self-evaluation

#### **Ensuring financial probity, by:**

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget

- Ensuring value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

### **How we work together**

There are some general principles which inform the work of our Governing Body and other Governing Bodies. These are widely accepted and are known as the code of conduct. Our school subscribes to these principles which include the following:

### **Governor code of conduct**

As individuals on the board we agree to the following:

### **Role & Responsibilities**

- We understand the purpose of the board and the role of the Head Teacher.
- We accept that we have no legal authority to act individually, except when the board has given us delegated authority to do so, and therefore we will only speak on behalf of the governing board when we have been specifically authorised to do so.
- We accept collective responsibility for all decisions made by the board or its delegated agents. This means that we will not speak against majority decisions outside the governing board meeting.
- 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 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 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 board.
- We will actively support and challenge the Head Teacher.
- We will agree to abide by the schools code of conduct
- We will promote high expectations of everyone in the school community, including high expectations for the behaviour, progress and attainment of all pupils in the school, and for the conduct and professionalism of both staff and governors.

### **Commitment**

- We acknowledge that accepting office as a governor involves the commitment of significant amounts of time and energy.
- We each involve ourselves actively in the work of the Governing Body and accept our fair share of responsibilities, including service on committees or working groups.
- We will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to. We will be well prepared to participate effectively.
- We will get to know the school well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
- We will visit the school, with all visits to school arranged in advance with the staff and undertaken within the framework established by the Governing Board and agreed with the Head Teacher.

- We will consider seriously our individual and collective needs for training and development, and will undertake relevant training

### **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. We may disclose the outcome of a vote where not constrained otherwise by confidentiality.

### **Conflicts of interest**

- We will record any pecuniary or other business interest (including those related to people we are connected with) that we have in connection with the Governing body's business in the Register of Business Interests, and if any such conflicted matter arises in a meeting we will offer to leave the meeting for the appropriate length of time. Our statements for the Register of Business Interests may be published on the school website and elsewhere.
- We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the situation arise.
- We will act in the best interests of the school as a whole and not as a representative of any group, even if elected to the governing body.

### **Breach of this code of conduct**

- If we believe this code has been breached, we will raise this issue with the Chair and the Chair will investigate; the Governing Body will only use suspension/removal 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 also note the following from the Governors Handbook 1.7 Accountability
- Governors should be mindful that in exercising Governing Body functions, and as required in maintained schools by legislation, **they must act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the school; and be open about the decisions they make and the**

**actions they take and in particular should be prepared to explain their decisions and actions to interested parties.**

**And acknowledge :**

The Seven Principles of Public Life

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

**Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

