

Braybrook Primary School



Governor Induction & Visits Policy

Status	Recommended
GB Monitor	Full Governing Body
Staff Lead	Headteacher
Senior Lead	Headteacher
Version	Ratified
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Introduction:

Welcome to your new governor induction pack, produced by Braybrook Primary School. This pack helps to explain the roles and responsibilities of a governor, how the governing body is structured in our school and how the governing body carries out its duties.

This pack includes the following:

- The responsibilities of a governor
- The different types of governor
- The responsibilities of the Head teacher, Leadership Team and the Chair of Governors
- Being an effective governor
- The governing body membership and structure
- Useful terms and abbreviations

Relevant supporting information:

- a copy of the School Development Plan (SDP)
- a full list of staff and the staffing structure
- a map showing the layout of the school
- a copy of the school rules
- a copy of the school targets
- a recent school newsletter
- a copy of the school's latest OfSTED report
- a copy of the most recent Governor Support Service newsletter

For completion:

- A pecuniary interests statement
- A skills matrix

Many new governors have confessed to being quite bemused during their first meetings and some felt unprepared for the barrage of papers with which they were greeted. In order to be effective, every governor needs some basic knowledge about their school and needs to be able to set this against a wider understanding of education. For both new and experienced governors there are training courses run by the Local Authority (LA). All governors are encouraged to take advantage of the training on offer. These courses are free of charge to governors.

What School Governors Do:

A school governing body has a strategic role in the development of the school but does not become involved in day-to-day management issues – that is the role of the Head Teacher.

You are there to:

- **provide a strategic view** - help to set and maintain the broad framework within which the Head Teacher and the staff should run the school.
- **act as a critical friend** - provide the Head Teacher with support and offer advice and information but also provide some challenge. The governing body is there to monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness and governors should therefore be prepared to ask challenging questions.
- **ensure accountability** - the Head Teacher and staff report to the governing body on the school's performance. In turn, the governing body is accountable to all stakeholders for the school's overall performance.

Different types of governor at Braybrook Primary School:

Parent Governors - parents or carers elected by other parents or carers with children at the School or, on occasion, appointed by the governing body;

Staff Governors - the Head Teacher and staff members elected by teaching and support Staff;

Community Governors - individuals chosen by governors from the local community who represent community interests;

LA Governors - appointed by the Local Authority, who take regard of the skills and experience which schools require and appoint candidates who support the schools' ethos and mission;

Associate Members - a discretionary category, appointed by the governing body, from individuals who may be able to make specific contributions, but who is not a governor and has no vote at full governing body meetings but may have limited voting rights at committee level.

Specific responsibilities of the Governing Body:

- set the overall budget for the school
- decide on the number of staff
- decide on the level of pay for teachers
- help to decide the priorities for the school when the school development plan is being created
- ensure the national curriculum is taught to all pupils
- set targets for pupil achievement
- publish national test and exam results
- compare the performance of their school to similar schools (RAISE)
- receive information about the quality of teaching in the school
- have a published strategy for dealing with parental complaints and concerns
- ensure health and safety issues are addressed
- set the times of school sessions
- consult the Head Teacher when making decisions
- ask challenging questions
- help develop school policies and procedures
- consider the repair and maintenance of school buildings
- consider the use of school premises outside school hours
- appoint committees of governors to look at specific issues such as finance, staffing, curriculum and premises.

Governing Bodies Don't:

- inspect the school
- report on the quality of teaching after visiting the school
- authorise all expenditure
- share concerns about staff capability
- decide on how pupils are taught different subjects
- have the right to exclude a pupil
- write the school's policies on their own
- rubberstamp recommendations from the Head Teacher
- automatically approve all apologies for absence for meetings sent by governors
- need to be aware of the performance objectives which had been set for individual teachers
- write the OfSTED action plan

The key responsibilities of the Head Teacher are:

- the internal organisation, management and control of the school
- performance management / appraisal of all staff
- formulating aims, objectives and policies for the governing body to consider adopting
- advising on and implementing the governing body strategic framework
- giving governors the information they needed to help the school raise its standards
- reporting on progress at each business meeting

The Chair of Governors is responsible for: (as listed by OfSTED)

- giving a clear lead in organising the governing body's work
- delegating and ensuring other governors are fully involved
- managing meetings effectively
- keeping other governors fully informed
- holding regular meetings with the Head Teacher
- co-operating with other agencies to support school improvement

The Chair has a pivotal role to play in helping the governing body work as a team. The Chair must have a clear view of the governing body and understand the shared visions for the school and know how that vision is to be achieved.

Being a school Governor:

What makes an effective School Governor?

- you care about improving children's educational attainment
- you want to work as part of a team and can value and respect the contribution made by different people
- you are willing to listen, learn and to ask questions
- you are open to ideas and have a feel for what is important to people
- you are enthusiastic
- you can commit time and energy
- you will attend relevant training

What does an effective Governor need to be familiar with?

- the recent history of the school
- the type of school and the nature of the pupil intake
- the number of pupils on roll and projected future numbers
- how the school is staffed, organised and managed
- the status of the school budget
- the contents of the school development plan
- the curriculum provided at the school
- the range of extra-curricular activities on offer and the nature of any extended services
- the school policies
- how the school communicates with parents, other schools and the community
- the layout of the buildings and grounds, their suitability and state of repair

How much time do Governors give?

A governor's term of office is usually for four years but as a volunteer you can resign at any time. Your main task is to attend meetings of the school governing body.

Business Meetings of the full governing body normally take place once each term. Each committee normally meets once a term but may meet more frequently, depending upon current issues the committees are involved with.

We actively encourage our Governors to visit the school, as part of their role in monitoring and evaluation: to observe practice, meet with staff and to familiarise themselves with the school. Governors are usually welcome, by invitation, to attend school performances, events and some staff training. A current list of organised events is included in the supporting information. However, we do recognise that not all governors can visit school during the day due to work commitments.

Be Prepared for a Meeting:

- read any papers before the meeting
- know who all the governors are (governors could be asked to wear name labels to help you)
- make sure you have all the necessary papers with you
- prepare your thoughts and questions before the meeting
- bring with you a pen, your diary and your annotated papers

Attendance

Any governor who, without permission, is absent from meetings of the full governing body for a continuous period of six months will cease to be a governor. If you need to offer apologies for a meeting this should be done through the Chair or the clerk, in advance of the meeting, with the reason for your absence noted.

Confidentiality

Governing Body meetings are not open to the public. Visitors may attend by invitation but may be asked to leave if a confidential item is discussed.

Governors **MUST** observe confidentiality regarding proceedings of the governing body in meetings and from their visits to school as governors. How an individual governor votes should always be regarded as confidential. The minutes of any part of the meeting that are confidential should be kept separate. In the main, confidential items will be those where the privacy of an individual needs to be respected.

Governors and the law

The intention of the law is that governors should be accountable and business should be transparent, with any confidential items being kept to a minimum. Any old documents governors wish to dispose of should be shredded, given the sensitive nature of some of the information.

Frequency, notice & duration of meetings

You will usually be given a term's notice of the next full governing body meeting date. You should receive your papers for the formal full governing body meetings seven days before the meeting with the papers setting out details of the date, time and place.

Committee meetings are organised by the committees and contact is made by email or telephone, giving governors details of agendas or necessary information they need for a meeting.

Agenda

The agenda, which will be contained with your notification for the meeting, will list all the items that are to be discussed at the meeting. Consider the agenda carefully before the meeting and make notes where there are items of particular interest or importance to you or where you want to ask a question.

You have the right to request that an item be placed on the agenda by contacting the Chair or clerk a few weeks before the meeting. If "Any Other Business" features on your agenda, and you wish to raise an issue under this item, you must discuss this with the Chair prior to the start of the meeting so the Chair can evaluate whether the meeting is an appropriate forum for the issue and can allow sufficient time for discussion.

Quorum

If a meeting of the governing body cannot be held for a lack of a quorum (50% of current membership) or has to be terminated on that account before all agenda items have been completed, the clerk must convene a further meeting as soon as reasonably practicable. If the governing body decide to terminate the meeting before all agenda items have been completed, it must first fix the date and time for a further meeting at which the outstanding items will be considered and must direct the clerk to convene that meeting accordingly.

Register of Pecuniary Interests

Governors and school staff have a responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business and personal interests and affairs and the interests of the school. Each Governor is required to complete this register each year. A copy for you to sign is included in the supporting information and needs to be returned to the Head Teacher as soon as possible.

Minutes

The clerk takes minutes of the business meetings which are a record of what happens at that meeting. Minute takers at committee meetings are agreed at the start of the meeting. Once approved by the full governing body, the minutes are a public record and are made available, on request, in school.

How the Governing Body is structured at Braybrook Primary School

The whole Governing Body will meet twice each term for a formal business meeting which looks at current issues within the school, takes a report from the Head Teacher and also takes feedback from the committees.

Whilst each Committee has a specific area of responsibility, the support of other committees may need to be sought before decisions can be actioned. Each committee has a core membership and arranges its meetings within the group. However, all governors are invited to attend committee meetings where they feel they wish to be involved in a specific issue.

Committees include: Resources Committee: Finance, Premises and Personnel
Pupil Achievement Committee: Standards, Achievement and Curriculum

Governors' Visits to School - Policy and Guidance

The governing body of Braybrook Primary School recognises that its members should, in seeking to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively, make efforts to visit the school in order to gain awareness and understanding which helps them in their strategic role.

New Governors will be offered, at an early stage, an opportunity to visit the school, at a date and time agreed with the Headteacher, in order to gain an understanding of systems, practice and current priorities for the school.

Governors' visits to the school are actively encouraged and warmly welcomed by the leadership and staff team at Braybrook Primary School, to both support and challenge the SLT in fulfilling its ongoing monitoring duties and furthering of whole school development. Visits to the school, however, should be agreed by appointment with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. Visiting governors should report to reception upon arrival and follow the procedure for visitors, in order to provide a good example for other visitors to our school. All visits will have an agreed focus, linked to an area of the school development plan (SDP) or related to their role as a link governor. The Head or Deputy will arrange a timetable for the visit which will be agreed with any staff involved. All governors will be expected to visit the school at least once per annum.

Governors should recognise that they have a strategic role and that the governing body acts as a unit at all times. They should respect the professional roles of staff and should raise any issues initially with the headteacher and then, if appropriate, at meetings of the governing body or one of its committees. It is important that governors are not seen to be acting as 'inspectors'. Visits to school by governors should, wherever possible, help to inform the strategic role of the governing body.

Governors acting as voluntary helpers should expect to be treated in the same way as any other voluntary helpers in the school, including limits to responsibility, supervision arrangements, training and support, and police checks where deemed necessary. (see volunteers guidance from EPM Manual Section B and Braybrook Volunteers Policy)

Governors are expected to hold DBS clearances from Braybrook School.

Governors will be expected to contribute feedback to the governing body or its committees arising from visits to the school. Outcomes of the visit will be shared with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher before the end of the visit and an agreed written report will be prepared by the governor to share with the governing body (see appendix 1 for an example or appendix 2 for the template). This report will be shared with the Headteacher prior to being shared with the governing body.

The governing body's policy on visits to the school by governors will be made clear to all new governors, through inclusion in an induction process which will be the responsibility of the Chair/Training Co-ordinator governor.

This policy will be monitored through feedback from governors and staff, and reviewed by the governing body or a committee.



Useful terms and abbreviations:

A

Admission limit the maximum number of pupils intended to be admitted into any year of a school

ACE Advisory Centre for Education. A non profit making campaigning body, which provides educational advice to parents and others

AMP Asset Management Plan

APP assessing pupil progress (format used to level children's attainment in reading, writing and numeracy)

Appeals parents have the right of appeal against decisions relating to admission to schools, special educational provision and exclusion from school

Appraisal the periodic reviewing of staff to identify their future needs in terms of training and staff development generally

AQA Assessment and Qualifications Alliance. The largest examining board in the UK

AST Advanced Skills Teacher

Attainment target the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils are expected to have by the end of each national curriculum key stage

AT Attainment Target

AWPU age weighted people unit. The sum of money allocated to the school for each pupil according to age. This is the basic unit of funding for the school

B

Ballot a method of voting, usually secret.

Baseline assessment assessment of pupils' attainment on entry

Benchmarking the technique which permits the comparison of data between schools or different departments and schools to allow performance to be assessed.

Best value replaces compulsory competitive tendering and confirms the need for all council services to be efficient, cost effective and responsive to client needs

Budget share the amount schools receive through the formula and for which the governing body has delegated responsibility under the local management of school (LMS)

BME Black and Minority Ethnic

BV Best Value

C

CAF Common Assessment Framework (Early Help Assessment)

Capital expenditure spending on building projects and large items of equipment

Casting vote an additional vote to be used by the chair when an equal number of votes are cast

Child protection governor the governor who oversees child protection

CiC Child in Care, who is fostered or temporarily resides away from their biological parents

Clerk the person appointed to carry out administrative duties to the governing body such as preparing the agenda, managing meetings and dealing with correspondence. The clerk advises the governing body on legal and procedural matters

Collective worship a single act of worship for all pupils required to take place in maintained schools

CRB Criminal Records Bureau. An organisation created to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse by identifying unsuitable employees and volunteers working with these vulnerable groups

COGS Co-ordinators of Governor Services

CPD continuing professional development

CVA contextual value added

D

DDA disability discrimination act

Delegated budget money which governing bodies can use to their discretion

Delegated powers committee or the Head Teacher permitted to take action on behalf of the governing body

DFE Department for Education

Devolved capital funding funding allocated to schools specifically for large capital projects

Directed Time when a teacher must be available to carry out duties, including attending staff and parents meetings under the direction of the Head Teacher

E

EAL English as an additional language

EBD emotional and behavioural difficulties

ECM Every Child Matters

EDP education development plan

EWO education welfare officer

Ex officio an individual who is able to attend meetings by virtue of holding a particular office

Exclusion pupils removed from schools for serious misconduct, either for a fixed period or permanent

Extended services a range of services or activities offered before or after the normal school day for the pupils, families and wider community

F

FTE Fixed Term Exclusion

FOI Freedom of Information

FSM free school meals

FTE full-time equivalent

H

H&S health and safety

HE higher education

HLTA higher level teaching assistant

HMI her majesty's inspector

HMCI her majesty's chief inspector

HSE health and safety executive

I

ICT information and communications technology

IEP individual education plan, drawn up for children with special needs

IIP Investors in People

IMD Index of Multiple Deprivation

INSET in service education and training for staff

Instrument of government the legal document setting out the composition of the governing body

IPM Individual Provision Map

ISR individual school range

ITA intervention teaching assistant

ITT initial teacher training

J

JAR Joint Area Review

K

KS Key Stage - the national curriculum is divided into four key stages, key stage one pupils aged five to seven, key stage two aged seven to 11, key stage three 11 to 14 and key stage four aged 14 to 16

L

LA Local Authority

LAC Looked After Children

LEA Local Education Authority

LMS Local Management of Schools where schools manage their own budgets

LSA Learning Support Assistant

LSC Learning and Skills Council

M

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MAT Multi-Agency Team

MENA minority ethnic new arrival (a child who has arrived from an alternative country in Europe)

Mixed ability teaching group in which children of all abilities are taught together

MLD Moderate Learning Difficulty

MPS Main Pay Scale

MSB Mainstream Support Base

N

NAHT National Association of Head Teachers

NASUWT National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers

National curriculum the curriculum required by law to be taught in all schools.

The governing body shares with the LA and the Head Teacher the responsibility of ensuring that it is implemented

NCVQ National Council for Vocational Qualifications

NGA National Governors Association

NGFL National Grid for Learning

NRT National Remodelling Team

NRwS New Relationship with School

Notice to improve OfSTED judgement

NPQH National Professional Qualification for Head Teachers

NTA Non-Teaching Assistant

NQT Newly Qualified Teacher

NUT national union of teachers

NVQ National Vocational Qualification

O

OfSTED Office for Standards in Education. The body which arranges and sets education standards

P

PARP pupil at risk panel

PFI Private Finance Initiative

PGCE Postgraduate Certificate in Education

Phase Leader a person responsible for the monitoring of standards in a particular area in the school. (e.g. Yr 5/6)

PI Performance Indicators

PIVATS performance indicators the value added target setting

PLASC Pupil Level Annual School Census

PM performance management

PoCA Protection of Children Act

PPA planning, preparation and assessment time for teachers (10% guaranteed non-contact time)

PPM pupil progress meeting (an opportunity to meet with teachers to discuss the progress of children in their class.)

Prospectus information about an individual school. Must be published annually

PRU pupil referral unit

Q

QCA Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

QTS qualified teacher status

Quorum the minimum number of members at a meeting for decisions to be made

R

RA record of achievement

RAISE Reporting and Analysis for Improvement Through School Self- Evaluation

RE religious education

Risk assessment assessment of the risks to health and safety pupils and staff are exposed to whilst undertaking specific activities

S

SATs standard attainment tasks used to assess attainment at the end of key stages of the national curriculum

School profile an online report to parents

SDP/SIP school development plan/school improvement plan

SEF self-evaluation form

SEN special educational needs

SENCO special educational needs coordinator. The teacher responsible for coordinating SEN provision in the school

Secondments the release of staffing on a temporary basis for work elsewhere

SIMS schools information management system. A computer software package to assist with managing information on pupils, staff and resources

SIP School Improvement Partner

SLA service level agreement

SLD severe learning difficulty

SLT Senior Leadership Team

SMT senior management team

SOC school organisation committee

Special measures a school which, when inspected has failed to provide an acceptable standard of education

Special school a school for children and young people whose needs cannot be met in a mainstream school

Stakeholders person or group of people with an interest in a particular organization, for example a school, stakeholders being parents, staff, pupils, governors, the community etc

Supply teacher a teacher who works in the school on a temporary basis to cover staff absence

T

TA teaching assistant

TDA teaching and development agency

TLR's teaching and learning responsibilities

TTA teacher training agency

U

Unauthorised absence absence by pupils from school which is not otherwise authorised

UPS upper pay scale

V

VA voluntary aided. Schools set up by and owned by a voluntary body usually the church body largely financed by the local authority. The governing body employs staff, controls pupil admissions and religious education

Value-added the progress schools help pupils make relative to their individual starting points

Virement the transfer of certain sums of money from one budget heading to another