Caroline Haslett Primary School

Remote and Hybrid Meetings Policy

Last reviewed on: 17th November 2026

Next review due by:

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1. Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- to provide a framework for running virtual meetings
- to provide guidance for those attending virtually
- to enable governors to be able to attend a meeting virtually where they are unable to attend face-to-face
- to support the governing board in carrying out its statutory responsibilities and maintain their strategic oversight of the school

2. Legislation and Guidance

2.1 Maintained schools:

This policy complies with the following legislation:

- The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 (regulations 8,13 and 14)
- The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (regulation 3)

2.2 The governing/trust board may determine that meetings are held fully virtually, hybrid or face to face provided that arrangements enable all participants to communicate effectively, participate fully in discussions and satisfy the requirements of the relevant governance regulations.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governance Professional (Clerk)

- The Governance Professional will give written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda at least seven clear days in advance to:
  - Governors
  - The Headteacher
  - Associate members

Where there are matters demanding urgent consideration, written notice and a copy of the agenda can be given within a shorter period as the Chair directs.

- The Governance Professional will minute virtual meetings, and meetings in which some participants are attending virtually, in the same way as face-to-face meetings.

- The Governance Professional will make sure the minutes reflect that the meeting is virtual, or if a governor is attending virtually.

- The Governance Professional will minute all decisions, and whether anything needs to be ratified at a later date, for example due to loss of connection.

3.2 The Chair

The Chair of the governing board will chair all virtual and hybrid governing board meetings, in the same way as face-to-face meetings. Committee Chairs will chair committee meetings in the same manner.

The Chair will:

- Ensure all participants are provided with details of the meeting platform and any joining instructions
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are considered for governors who may experience difficulties accessing virtual meetings
- Ensure that all members of the governing board are aware of the procedures outlined in this document
- Notify members in advance if the meeting will be conducted virtually or as a hybrid meeting
- Consider any objections raised regarding the proposed format of the meeting
- Ensure all participants have an opportunity to contribute fully to discussion and decision-making
- Confirm at the start of the meeting that all attendees can hear and be heard
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained throughout the meeting
- Determine, in consultation with the Governance Professional (Clerk), whether there is a legitimate reason for any meeting to be recorded
- Ensure that any approved recording is managed and deleted in accordance with the school's Data Protection, Records Management and ICT policies.

3.3 Members of the governing board will:

- Be aware of, and act in accordance with, the procedures outlined in this document
- Act in accordance with the Governing Board Code of Conduct and agreed Standing Orders (where adopted) whilst in virtual board meetings
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Be mindful of their surroundings – they will consider the privacy of the room, including, but not limited to, who or what is visible or audible in the background
    - Governors must ensure that confidential papers are stored securely during and after the meeting and that screens cannot be viewed by unauthorised persons
- Ensure they participate from an appropriate location where confidential discussions cannot be overheard by unauthorised persons
- Not make audio, video or screen recordings of any meeting without the express permission of the Governing Board
- Attend for the entire meeting wherever possible
- Participate with cameras switched on unless prevented by technical difficulties or exceptional circumstances
- Focus on the business of the meeting in the same way as if attending in person
- Declare any conflicts of interest in accordance with the Governing Board's procedures
- Notify the Chair and Clerk in advance if they experience difficulties accessing the meeting platform
- Mute microphones when not speaking
- Ask questions during the meeting by clicking on “raise hand” indicator

3.4 Technology and Security

The school will ensure that any platform used for Governing Board meetings:

- Meets the school's ICT and cyber security requirements
- Complies with Data Protection legislation
- Enables governors to participate fully in discussion and decision-making
- Provides appropriate controls to maintain confidentiality

The governing/trust board will periodically review the suitability of the platform used for remote meetings.

4. Virtual Meetings

4.1 Virtual attendance at face-to-face meetings

The governing board may hold meetings:

- Face-to-face;
- Virtually; or
- As hybrid meetings, where some participants attend in person and others participate remotely.

Any governor wishing to attend remotely should notify the Chair and Governance Professional (Clerk) at least 48 hours before the meeting, where reasonably practicable.

Governors attending remotely will be treated as present for the purposes of attendance, participation, quorum and voting, provided they can hear and be heard by all participants throughout the meeting.

The Chair may determine that a particular meeting or agenda item should be conducted in person where the nature of the business requires this.

4.2 Technological difficulties (Fully virtual meeting or virtual attendance at face-to-face meeting)

If after all reasonable efforts it does not prove possible for a governor to participate by telephone or video conference, the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

The Governance Professional will record in the minutes that the governor in question attempted to participate but was unable to do so.

4.3 Recording the meeting

Meetings will not normally be recorded.

A recording may only be made where:

- There is a clear and legitimate purpose for doing so;
- The Chair and Clerk agree the recording is necessary;
- All participants are informed in advance; and
- The recording complies with Data Protection requirements.

Where a recording is approved:

- The Clerk will be responsible for the recording
- Recordings will be used solely for the purpose identified
- Recordings will not form part of the official record of the meeting
- Recordings will be deleted securely as soon as they are no longer required.

At the start of the meeting the Governance Professional (Clerk) will make sure all governors agree to the meeting being recorded.

Where approval is granted, it is the Governance Professional alone who has permission to record the meeting. No one else has authority to record the meeting unless they have explicit authority from governors to do so.

4.4 Quorum

Governors/trustees participating remotely are deemed present and count towards quorum.

If a governor loses connection and is unable to participate in discussion, they will cease to count towards quorum until the connection has been restored.

If the meeting becomes inquorate:

- Discussion may continue for information-sharing purposes only
- No decisions may be taken
- No votes may be held
- Any deferred decisions must be reconsidered at a future quorate meeting

If all participants lose connection, the Chair and Governance Professional (Clerk) will arrange for the meeting to be adjourned and reconvened.

4.5 Voting

Governors may vote on any agenda item where they have been present for the discussion and decision-making process.

Voting may be undertaken by:

- Verbal confirmation;
- Show of hands using video;
- Electronic polling facilities; or
- Any other method agreed by the Chair and the Governance Professional (Clerk)

Where a confidential ballot is required, the Chair and Governance Professional (Clerk) will determine an appropriate method for conducting the vote that maintains confidentiality and integrity.

The Governance Professional (Clerk) will record the outcome of all votes within the minutes.

4.6 Conflicts of interest

Where a governor declares a conflict of interest, they will withdraw from the meeting by leaving the call.

- The declaration will be recorded in the minutes
- The governor will leave the virtual meeting or physical room as appropriate

- The Clerk will record the time of withdrawal and return
- The governor will not receive papers or participate in any discussion or decision relating to the item concerned.

The Governance Professional (Clerk) will notify the governor when they may re-join the meeting.

4.7 Safeguarding

Virtual governance meetings should be conducted in a manner that upholds the school's safeguarding responsibilities and protects the welfare, privacy and dignity of children, staff and families discussed during proceedings

The Governing Board will seek to make reasonable adjustments to ensure all governors can participate fully in virtual meetings. This may include providing alternative means of access, adjusting meeting arrangements or providing additional support where required.

5. Hybrid meeting provision

The Governing Board may hold hybrid meetings where some participants attend in person and others participate remotely. All participants must be able to hear, speak and contribute effectively throughout the meeting

6. Holding exclusion and other statutory panels remotely

Where legislation and statutory guidance permit, Governing Board reinstatement meetings and Independent Review Panels relating to suspensions and permanent exclusions may be held using remote access technology if requested by parents and where the required criteria are met.

Remote meetings should not be a default option and face-to-face meetings should always be encouraged. Further advice is set out here: Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

The Chair should ensure that:

- All parties can participate fully;
- The process remains fair and transparent;
- Confidentiality is maintained; and
- The meeting complies with current statutory guidance.

7. Links with other policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- E-Security Policy
- Governor code of conduct
- Exclusion policy

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance or local governance practice make this necessary.

The review will be undertaken by the Chair and Governance Professional (Clerk) and approved by the Full Governing Board.