



Cherrywood Federation Governing Body Terms of Reference

The name of the governing body is "The Governing Body of Cherrywood Federation"

This document outlines the key roles, responsibilities and structure of the Governing Body at Cherrywood Federation. It is not meant to be exhaustive in its content, rather giving a summary. For more detailed information please refer to the following Department of Education publications: *DFE Maintained Schools Governance Guide and Clerking Competency Framework*.

The governing board is the schools' legally accountable body and must operate in the best interests of the schools (Hatfield Primary School and Joseph Hood Primary School).

The task of the governing board is to lead the schools strategically, focusing on the three core functions set out below:

Establishing the strategic direction, by:

- Setting and ensuring clarity of vision, values, and objectives for the schools
- Agreeing the schools' improvement strategy with priorities and targets
- Meeting statutory duties

Ensuring accountability, by:

- Appointing the lead executive/headteacher (where delegated)
- Monitoring the educational performance of the schools and progress towards agreed targets
- Performance managing the lead executive/headteacher (where delegated)
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Contributing to schools' self-evaluation
- *Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff;*

Overseeing financial performance, by:

- Setting the budget
- Monitoring spending against the budget
- Ensuring money is well spent and value for money is obtained
- Ensuring risks to the organisation are managed

Membership Structure

As outlined in the 'Instrument of Government of Cherrywood Federation 2024'

The governing body shall consist of:

- Two parent governors
- One LA governor
- One staff governor
- One Executive Headteacher and two Head of Schools (one from each of the federated schools)
- Eight co-opted governors

Total number of governors is fifteen.

Appointed governors hold their post for a four year term
(Members of school staff may be invited to attend meetings)

The Role of the Governing Body

The board may delegate functions to individual governors, the Executive Headteacher (in certain circumstances) and committees of the board, but it remains accountable and is responsible for all decisions made. The board must act with integrity, objectivity and honesty and in the best interests of the schools and should avoid conflicts of interest. The board should make sure it does not get involved in the day-to-day running of the school (operational), which is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher. It must operate and make decisions in the best interests of the schools and in line with its three core functions. As the strategic lead for the schools, it is vital that the board understands, and engages with the communities it serves.

The Dept. of Education states that effective governance is based on six key features:

Strategic leadership that sets and champions vision, ethos and strategy.

Accountability that drives up educational standards and financial performance.

People with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity.

Structures that reinforce clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

Compliance with statutory and contractual requirements.

Evaluation to monitor and improve the quality and impact of governance.

By carrying out their responsibilities, outlined below, the Cherrywood Federation Governing Body commits to operating in a manner that ensures effective governance at the schools.

Main Responsibilities of the Governing Body

Structure

- To appoint or remove the Chair and Vice Chair
- To appoint or remove a Clerk to the Governing Body
- To suspend or remove a governor if agreed by majority vote (this includes elected governors such as staff and parent governors)
- To establish the committees of the Governing Body plus their terms of reference and membership
- To decide which functions and responsibilities of the Governing Body will be delegated to committees, groups and individuals, and review these annually.
- To appoint the Chair of any committee.
- To seek to fill governor vacancies as they arise and to appoint new governors where it is possible for the governing body to do this, e.g., Co-opted governors.
- To ensure every Governor attend induction training within six months of appointment, plus additional development courses during each academic year.
- To establish and maintain a register of relevant business interests of governors who influence financial decisions. This should be open to examination by governors, staff, parents and the LA.

Skills

- To undertake regular skills audits to identify skill and knowledge gaps, which both define recruitment needs and inform a planned cycle of continuous professional development (CPD)
- To ensure that the members of the board have the skills that are needed to carry out the responsibilities of the governing body effectively and thoroughly.
- To keep up to date with, and respond to, changes in legislation and updated requirements of the governing body.

Meetings

- To meet regularly enough to ensure that the board can fulfil its responsibilities, with a minimum requirement of 3 Full Governing Body meeting a year and 6 Finance Meetings (and business conducted only when in quorate) *
(*The quorum for a meeting of the governing body and for any vote on any matter at such a meeting, is one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of the governing body or the delegated committee.)
- To ensure that all statutory items listed in the Local Authority's model agenda are featured on the agenda of either the Full Governing Body Meeting or on the agenda of a delegated committee.
- To receive reports from any individual or committee to whom a decision or responsibility has been delegated and to consider whether any further action by the Governing Body is necessary.
- To agree constitutional matters, including procedures where the Governing Body has discretion.
- To review and approve the Governors' Code of Conduct

Policies

- To keep school policies and practice under review and to make revisions where appropriate.
- To approve policies not delegated to the Executive Headteacher.
- To ensure that the schools have an effective the School Development Plan in place.
- To ensure that the schools have an effective SEF (Self Evaluation Form) in place.
- To ensure that the schools have an up-to-date written 'statement of principles' to help determine the measures that make up the school's behaviour policy and that they are published online. The Governing Body should actively take part in drafting these.
- To ensure that the schools have effective safeguarding policies and procedures, meeting statutory guidance published in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
- To ensure that key duties such as Inclusion, Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) and Attendance Monitoring are undertaken effectively across the schools.
- To take responsibility for the Governors section of the SDP.

Communication

- To communicate with each other about school matters only through the secure email address given to governors by the Local Authority. Governors should not communicate about any governor business via personal email addresses or messaging apps. (Note. There is a governors WhatsApp group. This is used only to alert governors to urgent business such as an emergency at the schools, an imminent Ofsted inspection or emails that require a fast response. No governor discussions or any sharing of sensitive information takes place in this group)
- To ensure that all governors details are up to date on the schools' GIAS website.
- To ensure that statutory information is published on the schools' website and updated when changes occur. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>
- To publish on our schools' website up-to-date details of governance arrangements in a readily accessible form.

Relationship with Stakeholders:

- To engage with stakeholders and ensure the voices of stakeholders are heard. (Includes parents/carers, pupils, staff, local community, local authority)

Executive Headteacher

- To provide challenge and hold the Executive Headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety.
- To use a range of reports and data, including data dashboards, progress data, external reports, examination outcomes and test results to challenge and hold leaders to account.
- To appoint an Executive Headteacher. The board must notify the LA in writing of any Executive Headteacher vacancy, advertise the post in a manner considered appropriate and appoint a selection panel. The board must appoint a member of staff to carry out the functions of an Executive Headteacher pending the appointment of an Executive

Headteacher or in the absence of an Executive Headteacher. Members of the selection panel may need additional training.

- To respond to any reports from the Local Authority that raises serious concerns about the performance of the Executive Headteacher.
- To ensure that at least three Governors are appointed to complete the Executive Headteacher's Performance Management.

Staff

- To be thoroughly satisfied that safer recruitment practices are applied in relation to the appointment of staff.
- To provide a procedure to enable staff to appeal against a decision to dismiss them.
- To have due regard for the wellbeing and mental health of the school leadership team and teaching staff more broadly.

Parents

- To ensure that the schools report to parents/carers annually on their pupils' progress and educational achievements. Pupil outcomes from statutory assessments must be included in annual reports to parents if taken by the child that year.
- To report to the parents at least annually on governor matters (this is no longer statutory but considered best practice. It *is* statutory to provide certain information to parents, however this is generally done via the schools' website.)

Risk

- To keep and maintain an active Risk Register
- To decide, after careful consideration, whether or not to insure risks not covered by the LA.
- To monitor the schools' risk assessments.

To set financial priorities

- To monitor the impact of pupil premium and other targeted funding streams.
- To establish procedures for dealing with complaints about the school and to publish them online.
- To define the extent of the Finance Committee's delegated authority
- To decide on how the schools' delegated budget should be spent, in accordance with Joseph Hood and Hatfeild's SDP and the requirements laid down by the Government and the Local Authority.
- To abide by the Local Authority's (Merton's) requirements on financial controls and monitoring when managing the delegated budget.
- To decide whether to delegate the power to spend the delegated budget to the Executive Headteacher and if so to establish the financial limits of delegated authority.
- To ensure that financial duties of staff are clearly described to avoid potential conflicts.
- To approve the first formal budget plan of the financial year.
- To approve the annual SFVS Documentation for submission to the LA.
- To determine virement and expenditure thresholds.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of spending decisions.
- To establish a charging policy for the supply of goods and services.
- To be alert to the potential for error, fraud or misappropriation of funds and immediately follow the school's agreed whistle blowing policy and Anti-Fraud Bribery and Corruption Policy where any concerns or uncertainty arises.
- To determine the staff, complement and a pay policy for the schools (in accordance with School Teachers' Pay and Conditions).

* The quorum for any meeting of full governors or a delegated committee is one half (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of the governing body or committee **but** must not be less than three governors.