

# **THE FEDERATION OF ST JOSEPH'S R.C. JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOLS**



## **STANDING ORDERS**

Approved by:	Full Governing Board
Last reviewed on:	September 2021
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## COMMITTEES

When establishing Committees, the Governing Body (GB) will ensure compliance with the regulations concerning the constitution of the Committees and will:

- Determine the membership (including non-Governors where permitted and appropriate, e.g. members of staff, associate members with specific remit);
- Ensure a Chair of the Committee will be appointed by each Committee, taking account of specific skills and qualities with a one-year term of office;
- Establish and record terms of reference;
- Review membership and terms of reference annually;
- Ensure Committees meet at appropriate times during the year, extra meetings may be required by any Committee;
- Determine arrangements for reporting back;
- Set the quorum for each Committee. Non-Governors, including associate members, are not included as part of the quorum

Committees to which the GB has delegated any of its functions will act strictly in accordance with the terms of delegation.

Each Committee will meet prior to the Full Governing Body (FGB) meeting each term, unless specific reason for delay should occur, on a date that will enable minutes and decisions to be shared as part of the agenda for the FGB. The agreed clerking arrangement for each meeting is that if possible, a professional clerk should clerk all Committee meetings.

## CONVENING MEETINGS

The GB will hold at least 3 FGB meetings per year and, where delegated committee meetings are in place, at least 3 meetings per committee per year will be held unless stated otherwise in the Terms of Reference.

The GB will set the dates for all its FGB and Committee meetings for the forthcoming academic year, at the first meeting of the school year, which the majority of Governors, if not all, will attend.

All meetings will be convened by the Clerk, in accordance with the arrangements made by the GB, but subject to (a) direction from the Chair where a matter is urgent and (b) any requisition signed by 3 Governors.

The agreed clerking arrangement for each meeting is that the named professional clerk will clerk all FGB meetings. The Clerk will produce a draft agenda three weeks in advance of a FGB meeting for discussion with the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher.

Any Governor may request an item on the agenda by writing to the clerk giving at least

**3 weeks' notice** and providing any papers to inform the decision of the Chair of Governors to include or not include an agenda item. If 3 or more Governors request the same item, this will automatically be put onto the agenda.

The agenda and papers will be emailed to all Governors or placed on the online document repository for Governors (USO) **at least 7 days in advance of each meeting**. Non-receipt of notice of a meeting will not invalidate the meeting. If any Governor should fail to receive papers prior to a scheduled meeting they should contact the Clerk.

Each agenda will contain an item on:

1. the School Development Plan – in order to monitor the plan and ensure school priorities and pupil progress are on every agenda;
2. Training – an opportunity to ensure training needs are monitored / addressed in order to deliver the SDP;
3. Link Governor / School Visits – an opportunity for feedback from Governor visits (see School Visits Policy)
4. Safeguarding – to ensure safeguarding has an appropriate high profile.

## MEETING PROCEEDINGS

The following people are entitled to attend a meeting of the GB:

- A Governor
- The Headteacher (whether or not a Governor)
- The Clerk to the GB
- An Associate Member
- Any other person who the GB as agreed can attend

No substitute members are permitted, except if the Headteacher is unable to attend due to illness or an emergency, the Deputy Headteacher will attend in his / her place. However, the deputy will not be entitled to vote, unless the deputy is acting headteacher.

Associate members may be asked to leave for specific items, e.g. when the business under consideration concerns an individual member of staff or pupil. Associate members are non-voting members.

The quorum for a FGB meeting is one half (rounded up to a whole number), not including vacancies.

The quorum for a Committee meeting is 3 Governors.

Meetings which become inquorate will be discontinued and rearranged within 2 weeks.

Meetings will be limited to 2 hours duration.

Where the business has not been completed within the agreed time, those Governors may resolve to either:

1. Continue the meeting for a further 30 minutes in order to deal with the business notified on the agenda;
2. Discontinue the meeting and arrange for the item to be moved to the agenda for the next meeting; or
3. Call a further meeting as soon as practicable to complete the unfinished business – within 2 weeks

Any Governor wishing to raise an item of urgent business at the meeting must do so under Any Other Business. The Chair will determine if this item is to be included in the business of the meeting or delegated to a Committee, individual or the next full meeting agenda.

At each meeting the Chair will ensure that all Governors enjoy equality of opportunity to express their views.

The GB will receive and note any decisions on matters which it has delegated to a Committee or to an individual. It is important that there is an avoidance of repeating discussion that has occurred in the Committee. Decisions will be recorded in the minutes. Recommendations received from working groups will be recorded in the minutes, together with any related GB resolution.

All decisions must be made by the GB unless the GB has delegated the function to a Committee or to an individual.

Governors may approve alternative arrangements for Governors to participate or vote at meetings of the GB, including but not limited to, by telephone or video conference. Otherwise, only Governors present at a meeting may vote; proxy voting is not allowed, except for consideration of a change of name of the school when special procedures will apply as set out in the Regulations.

## VOTING

For any decision to be agreed, the GB must be quorate. A simple majority decides any matter put to the vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair has a casting or second vote. In the case of any contentious issues, or by request from one or more Governors, voting will be by secret ballot, otherwise voting will be by ordinary show of hands (this can be also done by electronic means, e.g. through voting buttons on a telephone or video conferencing system).

Decisions of the GB are binding upon all its members.

Decisions of the GB (or any of its committees) may be amended or rescinded at a subsequent meeting of the GB only if a proposal to amend or rescind appears as a specific agenda item.

No action may be taken by an individual Governor unless authority to do so has been delegated formally by resolution of the GB.

The Chair, or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chair, has authority to take urgent action between meetings where:

- A delay in dealing with the matter would be seriously detrimental to the interest of the school, a pupil, his/her parents, or a member of staff;
- A meeting could not be called in sufficient time to deal with the matter; and
- The matter is one which can be delegated to an individual under Government regulations

If the Chair (or Vice-Chair) takes any urgent action between meetings, the facts will be reported to the next meeting of the GB.

## MINUTES AND PAPERS

The Clerk will ensure that the minutes of the GB are drawn up, agreed by the Chair, and circulated to the GB **within 14 days of the GB meeting**.

The Clerk will ensure that the minutes are approved by the GB and signed by the Chair at the next GB meeting.

The GB will then ensure that the following are available for inspection by any interested person:

- The agenda for every meeting
- The signed minutes for every meeting
- Any report of other paper considered at any such meeting

Any material in the minutes relating to a named person who works or who will work in the school, a named pupil or potential pupil, or any other matter that the GB is satisfied should remain confidential may be excluded from being made public.

## WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

In establishing working groups, the GB will:

- Determine the membership, including non-governors, and the method of appointing the Chair;
- Establish and record terms of reference;
- Determine the time frame working groups have to complete their work to allow working groups to determine their own timetables within given time limits;
- Determine procedures for reporting back

The Headteacher and the Chair of Governors have the right to attend any working group meeting.

Working groups established for specific purposes will be discontinued when their work has been completed.

All working groups will update the relevant committee of full GB meeting as to progress and actions required each term. At the end of the working party project, the working party will present a written report, including recommendations, to the next meeting of the Committee or GB.

## ELECTION OF THE FGB CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The GB must have a Chair and a Vice-Chair in post. No meeting can continue until both posts are filled.

The GB has agreed that the term of office for the Chair and the Vice-Chair of Governors is one year.

When the Chair and the Vice-Chair are due for election, the GB will elect both positions from among its number (excluding any employee or pupils at the school). The election of Chair and Vice-Chair will be a specific item of business on the agenda for that meeting.

The process for election of a Chair and a Vice-Chair will be as follows:

1. All Governors who are interested in being the Chair and a Vice-Chair will let the Clerk know ideally 3 weeks before the meeting date, submitting a nomination form with their reasons.
2. No Governor who is paid by the school can be elected Chair or a Vice-Chair.
3. The Clerk will ensure that this is an agenda item for the first meeting of every school year.
4. The Clerk will take the Chair when the Chair is being elected. This is from the beginning of the meeting until the election of the new Chair.
5. Each Governor who wishes to become Chair, will be allowed 2 minutes to state their reasons to the GB.
6. Governors standing for election will then withdraw and not vote (even if only one person is standing for election, this Governor must withdraw whilst the GB deliberates).
7. The vote will be decided by a secret vote. There is no second or casting vote in the election of Chair.
8. In the event of a tie, the GB have agreed that steps 6 – 8 will be repeated
9. If the vote remains tied, the GB have agreed the outcome will be decided on the toss of a coin.
10. If nobody has indicated willingness to stand for office of chair, the meeting cannot continue until a Chair can be elected.
11. The process for electing the Vice-Chair is the same, except the new Chair will run the proceedings.
12. A Vice-Chair must be elected during the first meeting of the school year to enable the meeting to go ahead.

If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, the GB will elect a Chair for that meeting.

If the Chair resigns or has to relinquish the office for any reason the Vice-Chair will act as Chair until a successor is appointed at the next meeting for the GB.

If the Vice-Chair resigns, or has to relinquish the office for any reason, a successor is appointed at the next meeting for the GB.

If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair resign, or has to relinquish their offices for any reason, the GB will hold a special meeting **within 2 weeks** to elect their successors.

## REMOVAL OR CHAIR OR VICE-CHAIR

The GB can remove the Chair or Vice-Chair by resolution. A resolution to remove the Chair or Vice-Chair will not have an effect unless the matter is specified as an item of business on the agenda for the meeting.

Before the GB votes to remove the Chair or Vice-Chair from office, the Governor proposing the removal must be at the meeting, state their reasons for doing so, and the Chair and/or the Vice-Chair be given an opportunity to make a statement in response, before withdrawing from the meeting, to allow the GB to deliberate and vote.

## ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS

The committees elect their Chair and Vice-Chair with the same procedures for electing the Chair and Vice Chair of the GB.

## APPOINTMENT OF LINK GOVERNORS

The GB will appoint the following Link Governors at its first meeting of the year:

- Religious Life of the School
- Child Protection / Safeguarding
- Special Education Needs
- Health and Safety through Resources Committee
- Looked After Children
- Subject Leads (Writing, Reading & Maths)
- Training and Development
- Attainment and Progress
- Finance



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Their term of office will be for one year (see Monitoring Policy). The Link Governor will provide a written report, using the agreed template, when feeding back to Committees / GB meetings.

## ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING AND VOTING IN GB MEETINGS

Any Governor will be able to participate in meetings of the GB by video conference(Zoom) or, if this proves impossible, by telephone, provided that

- The Governor and the GB have access to the appropriate equipment
- The Governor has given notice of his/her intention to do so and provided the GB with the appropriate contact details, at least 48 hours before the meeting
- Where Governors participate or meetings are held by video link it is essential that all participants can be seen as well as heard
- The Governor participates in the whole agenda and not just the vote
- If after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for the person to participate by video conference(Zoom) or telephone the meeting will still proceed with its business provided it is quorate
- It is vital that any Governor participating remotely should remember that the business of Governing Board meetings is confidential and should ensure that discussions cannot be overheard by outsiders.

## COMMITMENT FROM ALL GOVERNORS

To carry out the Governor role effectively, every Governor will commit the time and energy needed.

This will usually be around **15 hours per month**, unless holding a position on the leadership team of the Board or if the school is not providing a good education, where the time commitment could be more.

**Every** Governor will take on an additional responsibility, in line with their skills and knowledge and needs of the GB.

**All meetings** in the evening and during the day will be attended as required.

All Governors will be fully prepared for all meetings, having read all the supporting documentation, and ready to ask appropriate, challenging questions.

All Governors will visit the school during the school day, **at least once a term**, to find out more about the school. If this is not possible eg the present Covid crisis, contact should be made with the appropriate member of staff at the school.

All Governors will respond when communicated with and return all requested information promptly.

Governors will attend a minimum of **one training and development session termly** to (a) meet their personal development needs and (b) to meet the needs of the FGB.

Each Governor will be a reflective Governor, who monitors and reviews their own performance **on a regular basis and at least yearly** with the training and development Governor.

## DISQUALIFICATION OF SCHOOL GOVERNOR FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

All Governors will make full efforts to attend all meetings and where Governors cannot attend, the Governor will explain in advance and in full, why attendance is not possible. The Board will decide and record their decision to accept the apologies or not to accept the apologies.

Where a Governor **has missed 3 meetings in a row**, the Chair of Governors, or a Governor who has had this responsibility delegated to them by the GB, will arrange to meet the Governor to discuss any difficulties and identify if support can be provided.

The Clerk will inform the Governor in writing, copying in the Chair of Governors, of the disqualification rule when the Governor **has failed to attend 3 months' worth of meetings**.

If a Governor, who has not had consent from the GB to miss a meeting (apologies have not been accepted) fails to attend all meetings of the FGB for a continuous period of six months, beginning with the date of the first meeting missed, is, on the expiry of that period, disqualified from continuing to hold office as a Governor of our school.

These Standing Orders were drawn up to clarify our procedures and agreed at a meeting of the FGB on 21 September 2021

Signed:  AE597C69E9674FE.....

Name: Margaret Bailey .....

Position: Chair of Governors

Date: 23-Sep-21 | 4:48 PM BST .....