

Mengham Infant School

Governing Body

Terms of Reference 2023/2024



Aims and Accountability.

The vision for Mengham Infant School is:

Mengham Infant School will be an outstanding learning environment, within which all children feel safe, inspired and valued; a place of excellence that gives our children the foundation they need to become creative, confident, life-long learners.

At Mengham Infant School, the over-riding purpose of the governing body is to support and challenge the school in providing the best possible education for its pupils. This is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of maintained school governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school' ¹

The responsibilities of the entire Governing Body are determined by a range of statutory and best practice directives. We adopt the view that governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a. **Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
- b. **Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff;** and
- c. **Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.**

These functions are reflected in regulations for maintained schools that came into force in September 2013² and in the criteria Ofsted inspectors use to judge the effectiveness of governance in maintained schools. ***The School Inspection Handbook***³ states that inspectors should consider the effectiveness of governance including how well governors:

- carry out their statutory duties, such as safeguarding, and understand the boundaries of their role as governors
- ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles; and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain
- ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, including long-term planning (for example, succession)
- contribute to the school's self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching, and reviewing the impact of their own work
- understand and take sufficient account of pupil data, particularly their understanding and use of the school data dashboard

¹ Section 21(2) of the Education Act 2002.

² The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013.

³ School Inspection Handbook September 2014 No 120101 para 165

- assure themselves of the rigour of the assessment process
- are aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups
- provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety, including by using the data dashboard, other progress data, examination outcomes and test results; or whether they hinder school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns or developing their own skills
- use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
- ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- are providing support for an effective headteacher
- monitor performance management systems and understand how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression , including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- engage with key stakeholders
- are transparent and accountable, including in terms of recruitment of staff, governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers.

The governing body is accountable to the LEA, to parents, to children and to the wider community for the way it carries out its functions.

It is responsible for determining the aims and overall conduct of the school. This includes deciding, with the Head teacher, how the school should develop and approving policies and procedures which will support that development.

The governing body is constituted according to the current Instrument of Governance.

Collective Responsibility: The governing body is a corporate entity and acts as a group.

Each governor has a right to participate, whilst respecting the views of others.

Governors are elected or appointed to reflect the community they serve.

Delegated Powers: The governing body is responsible for the School Improvement Plan and Financial management and control of the schools delegated budget, grants or any unofficial funds.

Oversee robust and transparent financial planning, spend and contracting to ensure that the budget is managed appropriately, effectively and provides Value for money. That all Financial Standards set by the DfE are followed.

The governing body delegates to Pay Committee The following:

1. annually determine salary progression for eligible teaching staff, following recommendation by the Headteacher or the Deputy Head Teacher
2. annually determine salary progression for the Headteacher, where eligible, following recommendation by the Headteacher Performance Management Committee.
3. deal with any request from a governor or the school leadership team to review leadership pay ranges and report any recommendations to the Full Governing Board who are responsible for staffing matters.
4. annually determine the salary progression for eligible support staff, following recommendation by the Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher.

The governing body delegates to the Head Teacher the following authority:

- Alterations to budget to reflect the resources made available by LA for statement of special education needs and for cases of extended sickness
- Virement between budget headings that do not exceed £3000 and which neither increase nor decrease previously approved budget plan.
- Any expenditure that exceeds £1,000 and is not part of the Government procurement contract, will require 3 quotes (as per Hampshire Controls Framework). Business cases for expenditure over £3000 for non-standard expenditure (i.e. not day to day running costs) will require approval at Full Board before purchase (regardless of whether it utilises the Government procurement contract).

Style and Standards: The governing body acts fairly, without prejudice, in accordance with the principles laid down by the committee on standards in Public Life (Nolan 1996).

An individual governor contributes to the overall governance process through support and challenge to the school.

The governing body and the Head teacher will respect each other's roles and maintain a professional and open relationship.

The governing body will use staff and governor time appropriately, sensitively and effectively.

The governing body will conduct its business, always having regard for everyone to maintain a reasonable work/life balance.

All governors will be encouraged to contribute to discussions and expected to support the corporate decision making process, maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality and discretion.

Individuals are bound by governing body decisions and should be loyal to them.

Membership, Training and Skills: The governing body will endeavour to ensure it has enough governors to fulfil its duties effectively. We will create a GB that demonstrates robust accountability.

All governors will be appointed for 4 years.

The governing body will work to create an environment in which it can recruit and retain proactive governors, offering appropriate support and training.

All governors will share the workload.

The skills of the individual governors will be audited.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair of Governors: Candidates may self-nominate at any time in advance of the vote.

The Clerk will take the chair for the election of the chair.

Where the election of the chair or vice chair is contested, voting will be by secret ballot.

Committees and Working Parties: The governing body has rescinded Resources Committee and Standards Committee and will be accountable for the previously delegated functions.

Pay Committee (a sub-committee of the Full Board) has been set up, see delegated powers (above).

Terms of reference will be reviewed annually for ratification by the FGB.

Committees will elect their chair annually and this will not be a full time member of the staff or an associate member of the Governing Body.

Working parties will be set up at the beginning of the academic year or as required.

Clerks: The Clerk to the governing body will discuss with the chair their role and performance annually and targets will be set.

The Clerk to the governing body will be encouraged to attend support meetings and relevant training.

In the absence of the Clerk, a meeting may be clerked by one of the attending Governors, but not the Head Teacher, or the chair of the meeting.

Meetings: The Chair and Headteacher will liaise at least 14 days before each full governing body meeting to determine the agenda, taking into account the cycle of business. The chair will meet with the clerk to share that information.

There will be no item for 'Any Other Business'. However should an urgent matter arise it can be covered under Matters Arising taking heed of the 7 day rule for papers

Distribution of papers: Governors will receive relevant information electronically 7 days before meetings. For governors who do not have access to email, hard copies will be provided on request.

Conduct and duration of meetings: Governors who are unable to attend FGB or committee meeting should notify either the Chair or if unavailable the Clerk (or the school office if on the day of the meeting) of their *absence and the reason for that absence*.

Where the governing body is not satisfied with the reason given for non-attendance, this will be recorded in the minutes.

The governing body will aim to complete full governing body meetings within two hours but not exceed 2.5 hours and postpone agenda items if time runs out.

Confidentiality: All items discussed at GB meetings are confidential to the Governors until the minutes of the meeting are approved, unless otherwise clearly stated in the meeting.

Parents and the community: The governing body will seek opportunities throughout the year to engage with parents and the community.

The quorum for any FGB or committee meeting will be 50% of the membership of the committee and subject to a minimum of 3 governors with voting rights (not including the Head Teacher).

FGB will meet 6 times in academic year 23/24, but may convene adhoc meetings via Zoom should the need arise given that we could once again be working in a rapidly changing environment as a result of Covid 19, which although significantly reduced in presence, is still a risk. Pay committee will meet as required by the pay policy/process. The Appeals committee will be convened as and when required taking account of the reciprocal agreement with Mengham Junior School.

Membership of Pay committees will be determined annually, with reference to the skills audit, Governors personal development and succession planning opportunities.

Strategic Planning and School Improvement: The Governing Body seeks a shared understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

The Governing Body has involvement in the planning and agenda for school improvement.

Self-evaluation of the work of the governing Body is used to plan further development.

Monitoring of school performance is done through visits to school, meetings with subject managers and examination of data and other information.

The governing body will be made aware and make use of external reports, except those naming individual staff, and these will be circulated to governors.

Governor visits: All governors are encouraged to spend time in the school in normal school hours in order to build and refresh their awareness of the school, subject to restrictions that may be imposed by Government/Local Authority or the Headteacher to Manage the health and safety of all.