



THE SALISBURY DIOCESAN
BOARD OF EDUCATION

'Working for children, young people, schools and parishes'

The Board of Education

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 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

DIOCESE OF SALISBURY



Roles and Responsibilities of Governors in Church Schools

A brief guide

Must be a committee rather than full GB:

- Staff dismissal - including redundancy - and Appeals.
- Pupil exclusion appeals.
- Selection of the Headteacher and deputy head (the GB must approve the panel's recommendation).
- Headteacher's performance management.
- Salaries of the Headteacher and deputy head and award of performance points.
- Use of incentive and discretionary allowances for staff.
- Admissions (VA and foundation schools)
- School attendance targets.
- Appeals against a direction to admit a child.

Further information may be found at:

www.salisbury.anglican.org

Functions that may not be delegated and must be ... by the whole GB

- The constitution of the GB and the Instrument of Government.
- Committee structures and their delegated powers and responsibilities, and to receive reports from the committees.
- Election of the chair and vice chair of the GB, and removal of the chair.
- The suspension of elected governors.
- Appointment of the clerk to the governors.
- Appointment of community, partnership and sponsor governors and associate members, and their removal.
- Confirmation of the appointment of the Headteacher and deputy head .

GB may delegate to a committee but not an individual the following:

- functions relating to approval of the first formal budget plan of the financial year.
- Functions relating to the alteration, discontinuance or change of category of maintained schools.
- Functions relating to school discipline policies.
- Functions relating to the exclusion of pupils (except in an emergency, when the Chair of Governors has the power to exercise these functions).
- Functions relating to admissions (VA and foundation schools).
- Functions relating to the school premises, including use of premises and the health and safety policy.
- Approval of the school prospectus and School Profile.
- Functions relating to the school's curriculum .

Background

School governors are one of the country's largest voluntary groups. 345,000 governors contributing to strategic development and raising standards of achievement at over 30,000 schools.

A school governing body is a corporate body that has a legal identity that is separate from its members. Individual governors are generally protected from personal liability as a result of GB's decisions and actions, provided they act honestly, reasonably and in good faith.

Individual governors have no power or right to act on behalf of the governing body except where the whole governing body has delegated a specific function to that individual or where regulations specify that a function is to be exercised in a particular way.

Governors are drawn from different parts of the community to help ensure diversity of views and experience, but does not mean that governors of a particular category 'represent' that group on the governing body.

Regulations came into force on 1 September 2000, which set out the "Terms of Reference" for governing bodies of all maintained schools in England.

The governing body must act with integrity, objectivity and honesty in the best interest of the school and be open about the decisions it makes and the actions it takes. In particular the governing body must be prepared to explain its decisions and actions to interested persons (though this does not mean the governing body is required to disclose information it has decided should be confidential).

Roles

The Governing Body fulfils a largely strategic role in the running of the school.

The GB will establish a strategic framework for the school by:

- Setting aims and objectives of the school.
- Setting Policies to achieve those aims and.
- Objectives Setting targets to achieve those aims and objectives

The Governing Body will monitor and evaluate progress towards achievement of its aims and objectives and regularly review the strategic framework for the school in light of that progress.

In establishing and monitoring the strategic framework the governing body considers any advice given by the Headteacher and must comply with any trust deed relating to the school.

The governing body will act as a critical friend to the Headteacher it will support the head and offer constructive criticism.

Responsibilities

Range of duties and powers and a general responsibility for the conduct of the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement including:

- Setting targets for pupil achievement.
- Managing the school's finances.
- Making sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based.
- Appointing staff and reviewing staff performance and pay.

What committees do you need?

It is for the GB to determine which committees it wants, and the GB has the right at any time to abolish a committee. A secondary school's committees might include:

People; Curriculum; Finance; Environment; Pay; School Development Group.

A primary school may decide that it could merge some of these or delegate minor functions to an individual. Additionally, the GB may set up working parties or task groups with particular matters to address. These would normally have no delegated powers but would report back to the GB.

Delegation to Committees

- A Governing Body can delegate its statutory functions to a committee, a governor or the Headteacher, subject to prescribed restrictions, described below.
- The GB must determine the membership and proceedings of any committee. Each committee must have a chair, who is either appointed by the GB or elected by the committee.
- The GB may remove the chair of a committee from office at any time.
- The GB must appoint a clerk to each committee, who may be a governor but may not be the Headteacher.
- It is for the governing body at a quorate meeting to establish a committee and determine its powers, membership and how the chair is to be appointed. The GB must review its committee.

Personal interests:

- Put responsibilities as a governor before personal interests.
- Ensure any business or pecuniary interests are declared as required and withdraw from meetings as appropriate.

Personal development:

- Undertake training and take advantage of opportunities to increase understanding and effectiveness as a governor.

Other:

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Act at all times fairly and without prejudice.
- Support the school in the community, exercising prudence and tact if contentious issues affecting the school arise outside the GB, and follow procedures agreed by the GB in making or responding to criticism or complaints.

Committees of the Governing Body

Delegation of Functions

1. The Headteacher will comply with any reasonable direction made by the governing body in performing any function it delegates to him or her.
2. Committees are set up by the GB to carry out most of the detail work.
 - This means they can enable the main GB meetings to concentrate on strategy and so help to use scarce governor time effectively.
 - Encourage diffident governors to take a fuller part in proceedings.
 - Bring in additional expertise to work on specifics

The Governing Body has considerable discretion as to how to discharge its responsibilities but is required to constitute itself in line with the regulations and to appoint a chair and vice chair.

The Governing Body may delegate certain of its responsibilities to certain governors or committees of governors, although in general, it is not compelled to do so.

The Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school and for the implementation of the GB's strategic framework.

1. The Headteacher must at least once a year report to the governing body on progress towards achieving its aims and objectives, in particular towards meeting specific targets set.
2. The Headteacher will advise the governing body in determining and reviewing its strategic framework for the school. In particular the Headteacher will formulate for consideration by the governing body *aims and objectives* for the school policies to achieve its aims and objectives and *targets* for achievement of the governing body's aims and objectives.

Roles of Governors

- Chair of Governors and Vice-Chair of Governors.
- Specific Roles with the governing body.

Foundation Governors

- Are appointed to represent the church in the school.
- Are in the majority in a VA school.
- Ensure clear Christian leadership in all areas of the conduct of the school.
- Have to approve the draft Instrument of Government.
- Preserve and develop the school's religious character.
- Ensure compliance with its Trust Deed.

Role of the Ex-Officio Governor

- Full duties of any other Foundation Governor.
- Communication.
- PCC, Archdeacon, SDBE.
- Pastoral.
- Commissioning service.
- Lead collective worship.
- Contribute to school activities.
- Share church activities.
- Chaplaincy – staff / parents / pupils.
- Prayer.

Roles and Actions

- Constitution of the Governing Body.
- School Governance (Constitution) (England). Regulations 2003. Number and category of governor.
- Terms of Reference of the Governing Body.
- Governor recruitment and selection.

Governor Job Descriptions

Meetings:

- Attend meetings of the GB whenever possible, and provide good reasons for any failure to attend meetings.
- Prepare for and contribute to meetings and complete any agreed follow-up work.

Knowledge of the school:

- Arrange to visit the school when teaching and learning are taking place and attend occasional school events and functions.
- Know the school's strengths, its areas for development and improvement plans.

Teamwork:

- Contribute to the GB's operation as an effective team by establishing and maintaining good working relationships with other governors and with staff.
- Recognise the power of the GB body is vested in the group and that no governor has individual authority unless it is delegated by the GB.
- Recognise the respective roles of the GB and the Headteacher and staff (the GB is a strategic body; the operational management of the school is the responsibility of the Headteacher).
- Recognise that governors are equal members of the GB and accept collective responsibility. Speak or act on behalf of the GB only when authorised to do so.
- Accept a fair share of the GB's work, including through active committee membership.