



Four Lanes Federation



Full Governing Board

Terms of Reference

V1: reviewed and approved September 2023

Primary Purpose

There are three key responsibilities of the Governing Board:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the Executive Headteacher (EHT) to account for the educational performance of the federation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the federation and making sure money is well spent

Membership

- The governing board will ensure it has sufficient governors to undertake its duties effectively and in accordance with the Guide to the Law for Governing Bodies.
- The governing board consists of 10 Co-opted Governors, 1 local authority Governor, 2 Parent Governors and 1 Staff Governor (all appointed for a 4-year term of office) and the EHT.
- The quorum must be no fewer than 50%
- The governing board will ensure that it creates an environment which enables it to recruit and retain effective governors and which encourages the participation of all groups and sections of the community.
- Mentors will be allocated to new governors.
- The governing board will consider for associate membership those individuals who can bring additional skills and/or experience to its committees

Election of chair and vice-chair

- The chair and vice chair will be elected for one year at a time. At the end of their term, they may stand for re-election.
- Candidates may self-nominate at any time in advance of the meeting at which the Chair / Vice Chair will be elected.
- Candidates will be able to make a personal statement to the meeting before the vote if they wish.
- The clerk will take the chair for the election of the chair.
- Where an election is contested, voting will be by secret ballot with the candidate receiving the largest number of votes being elected.

Appointment of a clerk

- The governing board subscribes to the Clerking Service offered by the Local Authority and will adhere to the terms and conditions set down in the agreement, including an annual performance review.

- The governing board will support the clerk in their continuing professional development, for example, the clerks' accreditation programme, the clerks' development programme, support meetings and whole governing board training.
- In the event that the federation chooses to terminate the Clerking Services contract, a clerk may be directly appointed by the federation, in which case they will have a contract of employment that includes specific provisions in relation to their work as clerk. This will show hours, rate of pay, method of payment, overtime pay and period of notice and accountability. The clerk will have an annual performance review.

Meetings

- An annual calendar of dates for main and committee meetings will be set and published by the end of the summer term.
- The Governing Board will, as far as possible, plan its business across the year to take account of the federation's internal management cycle and the ready availability of information and reports.
- The governing board will hold the minimum number of meetings necessary to ensure the strategic business of the federation is properly addressed.
- The Full Governing Board will meet no fewer than six times per academic year.
- Governors are expected to make every effort to attend all meetings and will receive relevant information seven days in advance of meetings to enable sound discussion and decisions to be made.
- Consent for absence may be granted by the governing board on request from governors who know they will be unable to attend meetings for an extended period. Where a governor's pattern of attendance is causing concern, they will be alerted to this by the clerk or the chair.
- The governing board will aim to complete full governing board meetings within no more than two hours.
- The meetings will not be open to the public but minutes shall be made available for public inspection, once approved. Information relating to a named person or any other matter that the committee considers confidential will not be made available for inspection.
- In the absence of the chair, the vice chair shall chair the meeting.
- The draft minutes will be circulated within two weeks of the meeting, and will be presented at the subsequent meeting of the full governing board by the chair and/or the vice chair for approval.
- Any decisions taken must be determined by a majority of votes of members present and voting – but no vote can be taken unless a majority of those present are governors.

Virtual Meetings

- This policy has been added as an Appendix to these terms of reference, but it should be noted that virtual participation in FGB meetings must only be requested through absolute necessity.

- This does not apply to committee meetings, working groups or informal meetings, when governors are free to select the most appropriate and convenient channel for their meeting.

Governing Board Organisation

Committee Structure

- The Governing Board will review its overall effectiveness, structure and membership annually.
- The Governing Board will appoint a Resources Committee, a Progress & Outcomes Committee, a Pay Committee and a Headteacher Performance Management Committee (HTPM) annually. All other business is under the remit of the Full Governing Board.
- Governor Committees to hear appeals, disciplinary or other matters are held by a minimum of three members of the GB, and will be convened as required to ensure impartiality of the members. Panel members will be selected alphabetically, taking into account governor availability and previous panel attendance.
- Terms of reference will be reviewed annually and ratified by the Governing Board at the first meeting of the academic year.
- Committees will elect their own chair, who will not be a member of staff or an Associate Member.
- FGB, Resources committee, and Progress & Outcome committee will be clerked by the appointed clerk. In the absence of the clerk, governors will select a governor to act as clerk for the purposes of the meeting. Or the chair may in consultation with the headteacher authorise the headteacher to appoint a member of staff to act as clerk. Pay and HTPM committees will be clerked by a member of the committee.

Delegation

In addition to responsibilities retained at governing board level by Regulations, the governing board will not delegate:

- Approval of the federation strategic plan or the school improvement plans
- Approval of the first annual budget for each financial year

Delegation of Financial Authority

Other than the points listed in 'Delegation' (above), the Full Governing Board has delegated the following responsibilities:

a) to the Resources Committee (see the Terms of Reference for Resources Committee):

1. Financial policy and planning
2. Financial monitoring

b) to the Pay Committee (see the Terms of Reference for Pay Committee)

1. The implementation of the aims and procedures set out in the Pay Policy

In addition, it should be noted that:

- The EHT has delegated authority for up to £3,000
- Expenditure of between £3,000 and £15,000 must be approved at the Resources Committee
- In circumstances where there is an immediate need, the EHT and Chair of Resources Committee can jointly agree unbudgeted expenditure between £3,000 and £15,000. Expenditure must subsequently be reported to Resources Committee.
- All expenditure above £15,000 must be approved at FGB

Recruitment

The EHT has authority to recruit on a like-for-like basis with salaries offered being within the terms of the Pay Policy.

Delegation of other matters

The FGB will review the list of delegated responsibilities at least once in each academic year.

School Improvement

The Governing Board:

- will seek a shared understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses of the schools in the federation.
- will participate in the completion and updating of the Self-Evaluation Forms (SEF) and consider their contents.
- will contribute to the strategic development of the federation.
- will consider a variety of internal and external information and use this to inform decision making.
- will visit the schools regularly to review progress against the School Improvement Plan in key areas.
- The governing board will require a written report from the EHT including, but not limited to:
 - Pupil achievement and progress
 - Progress against the School Improvement Plan
 - School self-evaluation
 - Fulfilment of statutory responsibilities
 - Key school metrics
- The governing board will be made aware and should make use of external inspection reports from the federation's Leadership and Learning Partner/Ofsted/County Council officers.
- The governors must ensure that the federation has in place all relevant statutory policies and meets all other statutory requirements.

Governor Relationships & Conduct

- The governing board and EHT will respect each other's roles and maintain a professional and open relationship, acknowledging the skills and contributions of all.
- The governing board will use staff and governor time appropriately, sensitively and effectively.
- The governing board will, in the way it conducts its business, have regard to the need for the EHT, staff and governors to maintain a reasonable balance between their work and home life.
- In planning the frequency and times of meetings the governing board will have due regard to the equality of opportunity to serve of current and future governors.
- All governors should contribute to discussions, support the decision-making process and maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality and discretion.
- Conflict is best resolved openly through discussion, decision-making and acceptance of the majority view. Where this cannot be achieved, suspension of a governor will be used as a last resort in accordance with current Regulations.
- New governors will be welcomed and provided with appropriate induction and training. All governors will undertake training relevant to their role.
- All governors will share the workload and take on additional responsibility at an appropriate time.
- All governors will read and sign up to the Four Lanes Federation Governing Board Code of Conduct, which is reviewed and agreed at the first meeting of the academic year.

Appendix A – Committees for certain functions

Additional committees / panels may be set up in particular instances, including (but not limited to) the following:

Governor Discipline Committees

To consider the Headteacher's decision to permanently exclude a pupil or to consider suspension(s) as required by statutory guidance

Complaints Panels

To hear stage 2 complaints as required by statutory guidance

Staffing Panels

To consider staffing matters such as investigation, disciplinary, dismissal, pay or grievance hearing, or related appeal as required by the school staff policies.

Membership & Quorum

Membership of these committees / panels will be determined on a case-by-case basis to ensure impartiality and will comprise a minimum of three governors. Members will be selected alphabetically, taking into account governor availability and previous panel attendance. The Headteacher is disqualified from membership

A quorum of three governors is required.

Training

Governors appointed to these committees must access the relevant available e-learning in advance of the meeting (either as a first training, or as a refresher).

- [Governors Discipline Committees \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/governors-discipline-committees)
- [Complaint Handling \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/complaint-handling)
- [Governor Hearings on Staffing Matters \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/governor-hearings-on-staffing-matters)
- [Conducting Investigations \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/conducting-investigations)

All governors are encouraged to consider the webinars bookable via GovernorHub such as Exclusion Practice and Procedures, Handling and Resolving Complaints, and so on as part of their personal development plan.

Appendix B – Roles and Responsibility

All Governors

Collectively the Governing Board is made up of individuals who bring a range of personal and professional experience to provide both collective support and challenge to the staff. Expectations of governors include:

- Raising standards of pupil achievement at Four Lanes Federation through school improvement
- Clarifying, in partnership with the federation leadership teams, the medium and long-term strategy; and monitoring that the current strategies support agreed targets
- Supporting, challenging, monitoring and evaluating the schools in a professional manner
- Taking joint and equal responsibility with all governors for accepting and progressing actions that ensure statutory responsibilities are met (i.e. Education Act)
- Engaging actively with the schools to ensure insight
- Appointing and supporting the performance of an effective Executive Headteacher and Heads of School
- Attending all Full Governing Board meetings
- Attending parent consultation evenings and other school events as a communication conduit
- Attending community events/meetings to represent the federation and to support community cohesion
- Contributing to the SEF in order to understand the implications of the judgements made
- Becoming knowledgeable about the federation and how it works on a daily basis through programmed visits with staff
- Supporting good working practices through being welcoming to new governors, keeping meetings on time and taking on a share of the work

Chair of Governors

- Public representative of the Governing Board
- Close liaison with the Executive Headteacher
- Decision maker in the absence of committee or Governing Board consensus
- Facilitating Full Governing Board meetings
- Support and authorise the work of the Executive Headteacher and federation
- Maintenance of mandatory records to Hampshire and National standards
- Forward strategic planning

Vice Chair of Governors

- Support work and activities of Chair of Governors
- Act as deputy for Chair of Governors when required and appropriate

Clerk

- Discharge administrative responsibilities as directed by Chair/Executive Headteacher
- Provide expertise and knowledge about governance and the law
- Ensure timely preparation of agendas and distribution of papers for meetings
- Take minutes at all Governing Board meetings and distribute as required

Chair of Resources Committee

- Liaison with Executive Headteacher and the federation's Administration Officers
- Preparing budgets with Executive Headteacher and Administration Officers
- Organisation and facilitation of Resources Committee meetings
- Preparation and presentation of relevant material at Resources Committee meetings
- Upward communication into full Governing Board meetings
- Ensures relevant policies are reviewed and approved according to the agreed schedule

Chair of Pay Committee

- Liaison with Executive Headteacher and the federation's Administration Officers
- Organisation and facilitation of Pay Committee meetings
- Preparation and presentation of relevant material at Pay Committee meetings
- Upward communication into Resources committee meetings

Chair of Progress & Outcomes Committee

- Liaison with Executive Headteacher (and Senior Leadership Teams, as appropriate)
- Ensures receipt of Analyse School Performance (ASP), Fisher Family Trust, SIP reports
- Organisation and facilitation of Progress & Outcomes Committee meetings
- Preparation and presentation of relevant material at Progress & Outcome Committee meetings
- Upward communication into full Governing Board meetings

Development & Training Governor (DTG)

- maintain and update as necessary the Governors' Training Policy;
- ensure that the in-house induction procedures for new governors are carried out promptly for all new governors, and the procedures are reviewed on an annual basis;
- maintain a skills and training audit of all governors and liaise with the chair as required so that:
 - the work of the governing board is appropriately allocated to suitably skilled individuals if available;
 - all governors undergo training relevant to their role on the governing board;
 - skills gaps are swiftly identified and filled through either, recruiting new governors, or getting current governors to attend relevant training;
 - all governors have an individual training plan, relevant to their role/s on the governing board to keep their knowledge up to date;
- actively promote governor training and assist with on-line bookings, if required;
- ensure that governors provide feedback from any training undertaken so that the training has a positive impact on the effectiveness of the governing board;

- report on training activities during governing board meetings;
- keep records of governors' attendance at training events;
- ensure that training evaluation procedures are followed;
- provide annual value for money evaluation against SLA.

Hampshire Forum Representative

- Ensure the needs and concerns of the Governing Board are fed into the Forum
- Communicate Forum discussion points back onto Governing Board
- Seek an alternate attendee from the governing body when unable to attend.

Link Governors

Link governors are appointed by the governing board to act as the link or liaison between the governing board and a specific subject, curriculum area or aspect of the work of the schools in the federation. The development of a good working relationship based on mutual trust with all staff is essential if the link governor is to be effective in this role and there should be a clear understanding that their role is as a source of support to the federation and a source of information for the governing board.

The assignment of a link governor role will, wherever possible, make best use of the governor's individual background and skills, particular interests and availability. Assignments will be made after consultation with the relevant governor.

Monitoring may involve any or all of the following activities: school visits (including the visit report), completion of monitoring checklists, learning walks, completion of statutory audits in conjunction with the appropriate member of staff, attendance at training events, feedback to the FGB.

All visits will be conducted according to the guidelines set out in the 'Governor Visits' policy and should be followed up by completion of a Visit Form. The Link Governor is responsible for ensuring that visit forms go through the agreed approval process before being circulated and stored.

Four Lanes Federation

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<i>Drafted by:</i>	<i>J Mallaby / H Whiting</i>

Alternative Participation in Governing Board Meetings

1. Overview

1.1 The Governing Board expects governors to be present at all meetings. Where this is not possible, members of the governing board of Four Lanes Federation are able to participate and vote virtually at full governing board and committee meetings. Virtual participation includes, but is not limited to, telephone, and video conference.

The School Governance (England) (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) Regulations 2013 make provision for governing bodies of maintained schools in England to: “approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including but not limited to by telephone or video conference”.

2 Meeting Arrangements

2.1 These arrangements apply to all meetings of the full governing board.

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- Notice of virtual participation must be given to the Clerk to the Governing Board by the governor who wishes to participate, no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting, and the reason for non-attendance in person. (exception to this is when the entire meeting is to be held virtually.)
- Virtual participation at FGB must only be requested through absolute necessity. It must not be utilised for convenience.
- It is the responsibility of individual governors, wishing to participate virtually, to ensure they are able to do so through a secure method in an environment conducive to confidential and private communication. Anyone participating in a meeting using technology must declare that they are in an environment which is a secure and which protects confidentiality.
- Virtual participation must be for the entire meeting and not just for specific agenda items or solely for voting purposes.

- It is the responsibility of those participating virtually to ensure they have a reliable connection.
- If the communication connection fails and reasonable attempts to reconnect are unsuccessful, virtual participation will no longer be possible and the agenda will not be delayed. The clerk will note the time that the connection was lost.
- Ensuring quorate meetings is the responsibility of the clerk who will monitor this throughout any meeting involving virtual participation and advise the board if a meeting ceases to become quorate.
- If there is to be a vote, governors must have relevant documents seven days prior to the meeting.
- Governors attending the meeting either by telephone or video conference will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to. Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (e.g. by taking a telephone call off speaker phone and the governor sharing their vote verbally with the clerk). Where this is not possible the governor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.
- Where there is no visual connection all meeting participants will always start their comments by stating their name.

2.2 Governors attending the meeting virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting. If the technological link is lost, they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless for decision making purposes; in this case, discussions could continue without decision making/voting taking place; it would be rescheduled on a future agenda.

2.3 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.

3. Virtual Meetings

3.1 Where a meeting is taking place virtually every effort will be made to enable all governors to access the meeting.

3.2 Where a meeting is taking place virtually the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered will be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting, except where the chair has exercised their right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation.

3.3 Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the clerk being present virtually or by a governor who is present, other than the headteacher, taking the minutes, and these will be presented to the next meeting of the full governing board.

3.4 Virtual meetings should not be recorded by any governor or the clerk without the approval of the governing board and for a specified purpose.

4. Review of this Policy

4.1 The policy will be reviewed annually, or at any time that circumstances require further review.