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**Swainswick Church School Local Governing Committee**

This document describes the structure and function of the Local Governing Committee at Swainswick Church School, its Committees and their Terms of Reference.

It is reviewed annually.

Last approved: December 2021

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# BWMAT Scheme of Delegation – Local Governing Committees

Extract: Governance Structure and Scheme of Delegation September 2021

**Terms of Reference – Local Governing Committees (LGC)**The Board delegates responsibility to LGCs for driving educational improvement via the monitoring and evaluation of educational performance against the School Development Plan (SDP), provision of challenge as well as support to hold school leaders to account for school standards; pupil outcomes for all, spirituality and wellbeing; stakeholder engagement and regulatory compliance i.e. safeguarding, H&S, SEND.

The information below set out the basic governance arrangements for all LGCs and is not exhaustive, further detail is to be provided in each LGC Terms of Reference, agreed by the Trust.

**Membership**

The Chairman of the Trust has delegated authority, following consultation with the CEO, to approve appointments to the Local Governing Committee and to remove Governors and Chairs of Governors from post. The term of office for Governors is 4 years, and the governors may be reappointed up to a maximum of 12 years.

The model governance arrangements for LGCs are set out in the table below. Each LGC has local discretion to appoint between 9 and 12 (maximum) governors, to accommodate this, the number of Foundation/Trust appointed members may vary, however Staff, Parent and Headteacher Governors must not vary from the requirements set out below. Variations to governance models may be agreed in exceptional circumstances, subject to agreement with the Trust.



Each LGC may also co-opt non-voting members to the LGC in addition to the membership listed above, due to a specialist area of expertise, for that reason co-opted members should be appointed to sub-committees of the LGC relevant to their specialist area. A person who shall be “co-opted” means a person who is to serve on the LGC without having been appointed or elected. The Trust may not co-opt a person who is employed at the Academy if thereby the number of persons employed at the Academy serving on the LGC would exceed that outlined above. The term of office for co-opted members is 1 year, and the member may be co-opted for additional terms.

The Committee appoints its own Chair and Vice-Chair, except in exceptional circumstances (eg. a resetting school), whereby appointments may be made by the Trust. The Chairperson is expected to serve no more than 3 years as Chair (unless in exceptional circumstances), to support training and succession planning within the LGC.

The LGC is expected to appoint the following Sub-Committees to ensure efficient and thorough coverage of all business:

* Pay/Remuneration Committee
* Finance and Resources Committee
* Ethos Committee
* Curriculum and Standards Committee

**Reporting**

* The Headteacher is to attend LGC meetings and report as the responsible officer for educational improvement in the school (s).
* The Clerk is to ensure minutes are shared with the central governance team within two weeks.
* Governors can be invited to the School Improvement Executive Board led by the Director of Education.
* The Chair is to promote a two-way flow of communication between the Trust Board, and LGCs

**Quorum and Meeting Frequency**

LGCs shall meet formally at least six times per year, and three voting members of the LGC (or where greater, any one third of the total number of members of the LGC) is required to be quorate. Decisions of the committee shall be taken by a majority vote of governors, with the Chair having a casting vote.

# Swainswick Church School Committees

Please see Appendix 1: Swainswick Church School Committee Mapping to the BWMAT Scheme of Delegation for the full list of committee responsibilities, although an outline summary is provided below.

## Swainswick Church School Local Governing Committee (LGC)

**Key Responsibilities**: The LGC takes a strategic role avoiding routine involvement in operational matters, acts as a critical friend to the school and is accountable for its decisions – specifically:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, strategic direction and Christian distinctiveness
2. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

Safeguarding is a standard agenda item and it is reported on at every LGC

Membership of the LGC is widely drawn to reflect the various aspects of school life and to represent a balance of interested parties. In identifying individuals to fulfil the positions available the LGC seeks to ensure the appropriate skills required for effective governance are fully represented. This is aided by conducting a Skills Audit annually.

Much of the business of the LGC is carried out through specific committees who report to the LGC at these meetings.

## Resources & Pay Committee

**Key Responsibilities**:

* Overseeing financial performance and making sure money is well spent
* Monitor, and review all matters relating to the maintenance and development of the school premises and grounds, security and Health and Safety.
* Ensure the school is staffed sufficiently for the fulfilment of the school’s development plan and the effective operation of the school.
* Holding the headteacher to account for the performance management of staff
* Responsible for determining pay progression of all school based staff
* Approves and supports restructuring of school-based posts (not Headteacher)
* Monitors terms and conditions, pay grades, roles and contracts to ensure they do not deviate from Trust standards

## Standards Committee

* Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
* Monitor and evaluate:
	+ Curriculum intent, progression, implementation and impact.
	+ rates of progress and standards of achievement by pupils, including any
	+ underachieving groups.
	+ the impact of quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of
	+ achievement
	+ Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities
	+ Pupil Premium, ‘narrowing the Gap’, and Sport Premium and ensure their
	+ effective implementation.
	+ the impact of continuing professional development of improving staff performance.

## Ethos Committee

**Key Responsibilities**:

* Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Schools vision, values and ethos
* Consider the extent to which the school intentionally embeds it’s Christian values, and the impact on Christian distinctiveness.
* Monitor and evaluate impact of the school’s communications; ensuring it is aligned to the Trust’s key messages and promotes the voice of parents, staff, and pupils.

# Meetings:

* Meetings are not open to the public but minutes shall be made available through the school office.
* Attendees other than members of the LGC can be invited to attend where appropriate
* Information that the LGC considers confidential does not have to be made available for inspection
* In the absence of the Chair, the committee shall choose an acting chair from among their number
* In the absence of the Clerk, the committee shall choose an acting clerk from among their number
* Draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated with the agenda for the next ordinary meeting by the Chair
* Any decision taken must be determined by a majority of votes of committee members present - but no vote can be taken unless the committee is quorate.

## Meeting Conduct:

* Meetings start promptly.
* If a Governor arrives late Clerk records in the minutes the point of arrival so that it is clear for what parts of the discussion they were present.
* If a vote is taken the majority decision is adopted.
* CoG should aim to adhere to timings where possible.
* CoG should aim to complete meetings within 2 hours.
* The following items appear on the agenda of LGC meetings:
	+ Prayer
	+ Apologies
	+ Declaration of Interest in any items on the Agenda
	+ Minutes of the previous LGC meeting for approval
	+ Matters arising from the minutes (those not elsewhere on the agenda)
	+ Safeguarding
	+ Headteachers report
	+ Governors Reports from Resources Committee & Standards Committee & where appropriate Sub-Committees, Working Groups & Individuals
	+ Any other items
	+ Date of next meeting (this will be scheduled in the Governor calendar but dates may be changed in exceptional circumstances and additional meetings added as determined necessary)

## Confidential Matters:

* Governors must withdraw from meetings if there could be a conflict between the interests of that person and that of the LGC or where a fair hearing must be given and there is reasonable doubt about the individual’s ability to act impartially e.g
	+ when they have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest
	+ when the subject of a vote for appointment or removal as Governor, Chair, Vice- Chair
	+ when they are employed by the school and a vote is being made in relation to the pay or performance appraisal of any particular person at the school
	+ when they are the Head and a vote is being made in relation to their pay or performance appraisal
* The LGC is legally required to make available the agenda, a signed copy of the minutes
* and any reports, documents or other papers considered.
* Details of discussion during Governors' meetings are considered confidential and may not
* be discussed with someone not entitled to attend the meeting.
* Governors can resolve that a matter is sensitive and should be a confidential item.
* Decisions relating to confidential items not recorded as part of the minutes which are
* available for public inspection but is recorded on a separate sheet, the circulation of
* which is restricted to members of the LGC.
* Anything relating to a named individual e.g. staff or pupil should be a confidential item.
* Clerk will divide the agenda into two parts where a particular matter should be completely
* confidential. The confidential item will be listed as a very general heading (e.g. staff
* matter) under the Part 2 heading.
* The same applies to confidential items of Committee or Sub-Committee meetings which
* should only be sent to members of the Committee who were present.
* Confidential minutes will be filed in a separate folder to remain confidential, only the Clerk, Chair and Head will have access to this folder.

# Link Governor Role:

**Purpose:**

* To assist the governing body to have a better understanding and knowledge of the subject/ area within the school
* **To support the school in its work of raising pupil attainment in the school.**

**Role Description:**

* The link governor is not an expert in the curriculum area, and will not make judgements about teaching.
* Link governor’s role is strategic - that of a ‘critical friend’ to the school - seeking to understand why the school has taken an approach, to explore how CPD is having an impact on teaching and learning, and with the curriculum lead understand outcomes for children. Question they might ask include:
	+ What does the progress and attainment data identify as focus areas?
	What is being done to support those children whose progress is lower than expected?
	+ Has this been successful? How does the school know? (i.e. is this reflected in the data, teacher observation etc.) What evidence of this can I see in the children’ work (learning walk, book look).
	+ What is being done to support those children whose attainment is lower than expected? Has this been successful? How does the school know? (i.e. is this reflected in the data, teacher observation etc.) What evidence of this can I see in the children’ work (learning walk, book look).
	+ What is being done to stretch the highest achievers? How is this approach reflected in the progress and attainment data? What evidence of this can I see in the children’ work (learning walk, book look).
	+ Is there consistency of approach across the school?
	+ Has the school been involved in moderation in this area?
	+ How does the school share best practice with other schools?
	+ How are children being supported in developing a love of learning in this subject?
	+ How are they being inspired
	+ How does this fit with cross-curricular/topic approach?
* Link Governor should develop an understanding of the school’s approach to assessment for their curriculum area
* May attend INSET or other training sessions (as an observer) if relevant to their curriculum area

**Expectations of the Role:**

* Link Governor to meet curriculum lead to discuss approach, progress and outcomes on a bi- termly basis.
* Link Governor to undertake Governor Visit (learning walk and book look) with a focus identified and agreed with staff curriculum lead - in line with Governor Visit Policy
* Link Governor to understand data and data trends (attainment and progress) in school for their curriculum area, and understand actions taken for improvement, and how this is reflected in outcomes for children.
* Link Governor to report to Standards Committee and contribute to Committee’s review of data in their area

NB: Safeguarding and SEN Link Governors are specific role, with different responsibilities.

# Governor Visits:

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| **DfE Governor’s Handbook** |
| “Governors need to know their school if accountability is going to be robust and their vision for the school is to be achieved. Many governors find that visiting, particularly during the day, is a helpful way to find out more about the school. Through pre- arranged visits that have a clear focus, governors can see for themselves whether the school is implementing their policies and improvement plans and how they are working in practice. Visits also provide an opportunity to talk with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views, though are unlikely to be sufficient for these purposes. Governors are not inspectors and it is not their role to assess the quality or method of teaching or extent of learning. They are also not school managers and should make sure they do not interfere in the day-to-day running of the school. Both are the role of the headteacher. If governors wish to spend time within a classroom, they need to be very clear why they are doing so.”  |

**What is a Governor Visit?**

A governor visit is a pre-planned and agreed visit by an individual or pair of governors to the school and classroom to gain a deeper understanding of the school, or a specific area of focus.

The Governing Body recognise that it is a privilege to visit the children and staff in the classroom, and will take care to observe discretely, as directed by the class teacher.

A governor visit is **not about**

* Making judgements on the quality of teaching or professional expertise of the teacher, this is the role of the headteacher
* Checking on progress of individual children
* Pursuing personal interests and concerns
* Monopolising school/teacher time

**Who and When?**

The LGC will organise a programme of visits with the help of the headteacher. These should be spread throughout the year, with the aim to achieve a minimum of one visit per term. In addition, new governors may make a general introductory visit of the school as part of their induction programme.

In order to ensure that visits are evenly shared amongst all classes and throughout the year one governor will co-ordinate the programme of visits. They will also be responsible for co-ordinating feedback, and providing a summary to FGB as part of the annual evaluation process.

We recognise that it may not be possible for every governor to be available during the day – this will depend on personal and work commitments. However, all governors should do some visits; the frequency and type of visit will vary according to availability and role.

**Why do we conduct Governor Visits?**

The governing committee has responsibility for the direction, policies and standards of the school and is accountable for its conduct and performance. Visiting the school is an excellent way to observe how it operates on a day-to-day basis but all governor visits should be focussed and relate to the KPIs and priorities in the School Development Plan. Governors should report back their findings, thus helping the whole governing body and its committees to make better informed judgements about the progress being made and informing strategic decision making.

The headteacher, who has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school, will guide the governing body on the areas of the curriculum, policies and School Development Plan to be covered each term.

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| **Potential benefits to governors:** | **Potential benefits to teachers:** |
| * To recognise and celebrate success of pupils and staff
* To build an effective relationship with the staff and a better understanding of the context in which they work
* To get to know the students
* To recognise different teaching styles
* To monitor policies in action
* To inform decision making
* To find out what resources are needed and prioritise them
 | * To ensure governors understand the reality of the classroom
* To get to know governors
* To understand better the governors’ roles and responsibilities
* To have an opportunity to reflect on practice through discussion
* To highlight the need for particular resources
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**Monitoring and evaluation of implementation and impact**

Governors’ visits will be an agenda item at the termly meeting of the governing committee. At the final meeting of each academic year the Visit Governor will report the number of visits conducted and the areas of focus. The Governing Committee will evaluate the extent to which visits have informed whole governing body understanding of the school’s work. Staff governors will feedback from colleagues and describe the extent to which staff’s understanding of the governing body’s role has been enhanced.

The governing body can then consider the following, and make any changes to this policy and the governor school visit form that may be required:

* Are the visits achieving the potential benefits identified?
* What worked well?
* Have there been any unexpected benefits?
* How can we make our practice even better?

# Appendix 1: Swainswick Church School Committee Mapping to the BWMAT Scheme of Delegation