

# **KINGSMEAD AND NEWTON'S WALK SCHOOL – GOVERNING BOARD 2022-2023**

To be reviewed annually

- CODE OF CONDUCT
- STANDING ORDERS
- GOVERNORS' ALLOWANCE POLICY
- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY
- CONSTITUTION
- TERMS OF REFERENCE (inc. policies )
- GOVERNOR MONITORING
- A GUIDE TO SCHOOL VISITS
- LETTER OF DISQUALIFICATION attendance

## **Model code of conduct (2021) For governing boards**

Governing boards should use a code of conduct alongside individual role descriptions to ensure all members understand what is expected of them.

The NGA model code of conduct is anchored in the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life. The code is also aligned with the Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education which outlines principles that support ethical decision-making and challenge unethical behaviour in schools and trusts.

### **Reviewing your code of conduct**

Annual review at AGM

Boards should also review their code of conduct upon any significant changes to the law or school/trust policy. NGA recommends that boards publish their code of conduct on their school/trust website

NGA model code of conduct

Once this code has been adopted by the governing board, all members agree to faithfully abide by it.

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**Adopted by:** The Kingsmead and Newton's Walk Board on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**Signed:**



[chair of board]

**The governing board agree that this code of conduct will be reviewed annually, upon significant changes to the law and policy or as needed and it will be endorsed by the full**

## **We agree to abide by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life:**

### **Selflessness**

We will act solely in terms of the public interest.

### **Integrity**

We will avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. We will not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family, or our friends. We will declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

### **Objectivity**

We will act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### **Accountability**

We are accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and will submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### **Openness**

We will act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information will not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### **Honesty**

We will be truthful.

### **Leadership**

We will exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. We will actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

### **We will focus on our core governance functions:**

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent  
NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:
4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

### **As individual board members, we agree to:**

#### **Fulfil our role & responsibilities**

1. We accept that our role is strategic and so will focus on our core functions rather than involve ourselves in day-to-day management.
2. \*For those working within a multi academy trust: We will fulfil our role and responsibilities as set out in our scheme of delegation.
3. We will develop, share and live the ethos and values of our school/s.
4. We agree to adhere to school/trust policies and procedures as set out by the relevant governing documents and law.
5. We will work collectively for the benefit of the school/s.
6. We will be candid but constructive and respectful when holding senior leaders to account.
7. We will consider how our decisions may affect the school/s and local community.
8. We will stand by the decisions that we make as a collective.

9. Where decisions and actions conflict with the Seven Principles of Public Life or may place pupils at risk, we will speak up and bring this to the attention of the relevant authorities.
10. We will only speak or act on behalf of the board if we have the authority to do so.
11. We will fulfil our responsibilities as a good employer, acting fairly and without prejudice.
12. When making or responding to complaints we will follow the established procedures.
13. We will strive to uphold the school's / trust's reputation in our private communications (including on social media).
14. \*We will not discriminate against anyone and will work to advance equality of opportunity for all.

### **Demonstrate our commitment to the role**

1. We will involve ourselves actively in the work of the board, and accept our fair share of responsibilities, serving on committees or working groups where required.
2. We will make every effort to attend all meetings and where we cannot attend explain in advance why we are unable to.
3. We will arrive at meetings prepared, having read all papers in advance, ready to make a positive contribution and observe protocol.
4. We will get to know the school/s well and respond to opportunities to involve ourselves in school activities.
5. We will visit the school/s and when doing so will make arrangements with relevant staff in advance and observe school and board protocol.
6. When visiting the school in a personal capacity (for example, as a parent or carer), we will continue to honour the commitments made in this code.
7. We will participate in induction training and take responsibility for developing our individual and collective skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

### **Build and maintain relationships**

1. We will develop effective working relationships with school leaders, staff, parents and other relevant stakeholders from our local community/communities.
2. We will express views openly, courteously and respectfully in all our communications with board members and staff both inside and outside of meetings.
3. \*We will work to create an inclusive environment where each board member's contributions are valued equally.
4. We will support the chair in their role of leading the board and ensuring appropriate conduct.

### **Respect confidentiality**

1. We will observe complete confidentiality both inside and outside of school when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern individual staff, pupils or families.
2. We will not reveal the details of any governing board vote.
3. We will ensure all confidential papers are held and disposed of appropriately.
4. We will maintain confidentiality even after we leave office.

### **Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent**

1. We will declare any business, personal or other interest that we have in connection with the board's business, and these will be recorded in the register of business interests.

2. We will also declare any conflict of loyalty at the start of any meeting should the need arise.
3. If a conflicted matter arises in a meeting, we will offer to leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and any subsequent vote.
4. We accept that the Register of Business Interests will be published on the school/trust's website.
5. We will act in the best interests of the school/trust as a whole and not as a representative of any group.
6. We accept that in the interests of open governance, our full names, date of appointment, terms of office, roles on the governing board, attendance records, relevant business and pecuniary interests, category of governor/trustee and the body responsible for appointing us will be published on the school/trust website.
7. We accept that information relating to board members will be collected and recorded on the DfE's national database (Get information about schools), some of which will be publicly available.

**\*New statement added in 2021**

**We understand that potential or perceived breaches of this code will be taken seriously and that a breach could lead to formal sanctions.**

## **STANDING ORDERS FOR GOVERNING BOARDS**

Standing Orders are rules established by the Governing Board to regulate the work of the governors. They are in addition to any government regulation and are optional. At the start of the academic year the Full Governing Board and Committees will agree the Terms of Reference Code of Conduct and Standing Orders.

### **MEETINGS**

Ordinarily Governing Board meetings will be held at the Kingsmead School Bridge Street Site and or on Teams.

Meetings are generally on a Monday and will start at 4.30p.m and will be limited to 2 hours.

Where business has not been completed within the agreed time, those governors present may resolve to continue the meeting in order to deal with the business notified on the agenda or agree to carry it forward.

### **AGENDA**

The Agenda for Full Governing Board meetings will be organised by the Clerk in consultation with the Head, Chair and Vice Chair. Agendas for committee meetings will be organised by the Clerk, Chair of governors, Chair of Committee and the Head.

Any governor may place an item on the Agenda by contacting the Clerk/Head/Chair not less than 10 days before the meeting.

Any governor wishing to raise an urgent item at the meeting must give notice at the start of the meeting. The Governing Board will decide whether any such item will be discussed or dealt with at a subsequent meeting.

### **ATTENDANCE- to be applied to FGB and Committee meetings**

Where a governor has sent an apology to the Clerk, the minutes will record the Governing Board's acceptance of the apology or otherwise.

It is a legal requirement for minutes to record acceptance or non-acceptance by the Governing Board of an individual governor's absence.

Giving an apology does not protect a governor from disqualification for failing to attend a Governing Board meeting.

If the Governor sends an apology for absence, the governors present decide whether or not to accept that apology. For example, "Apologies for absence were received and accepted from XXX or "Apologies for absence were received from XXX but the Governing Board agreed not to accept this apology".

If no apologies are given this must also be minuted: "Apologies for absence were not received from XXX. By default, this now means that the six-month disqualification period commences. The next section explains this. The time of arrival and/or departure of any governor will be recorded in the minutes.

## **NON-ATTENDANCE**

It is important that the majority of governors attend meetings on a regular basis. However, there will be occasions when governors are unable to attend a meeting for a very good reason.

There is an expectation that if governors cannot attend regularly that they put the needs of the school first in their decision-making and should not undermine the effectiveness of the governing board by not discharging their responsibilities fully. To be fully effective governors are expected to attend all FGB and where appropriate committee meetings.

There is an expectation that governors should attend more the 50% of the time in a rolling academic year

If the Clerk or Chair notes that a governor's absence is of concern

- three meetings missed
- no apologies received

then the clerk or chair will email the governor to enquire as to the reason for absence. On discovering that the problem is short lived, time specific (ill health, family problem, specific work issue) no further action will be taken at this stage.

If the problem persists

- six meetings missed
- no apologies received
- apologies not accepted by the governing board

All governors, apart from the Head, **will be disqualified from being a governor if they have failed to attend a Governing Board meeting for a continuous period of six months without:**

- giving their apologies
- obtaining the consent of the Governing Board.

At this time the clerk will send the standard letter /email to the governor (Appendix A ) A follow up letter/email will be sent if there is no reply to the first.

## **MINUTES**

Within 10 days of the meeting, the draft minutes will be sent by the Clerk to Chair, Chair of Committee for checking.

Those minutes, which the Governing Board determines as confidential, will be minuted separately and will not be publicly available. Trust Governor allows limited access to specified items such as confidential minutes. They will only be available for checking and reference purpose to relevant governors.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

All incoming correspondence to the Governing Board is for the attention of the whole Governing Board whether addressed to the Chair, Clerk or Governors.

The Clerk will receive and log all correspondence to the Governing Board.

The Clerk will present all significant items to the next meeting of the Governing Board.

All correspondence with other bodies should be via the Clerk.

## **DEBATE**

The Chair will ensure that all governors enjoy equality of opportunity to express their views. The Chair will regulate all debates.

## **DECISION MAKING**

The Governing Board must make all decisions unless an individual or a Committee has been delegated to deal with a specific issue as stipulated in Terms of Reference.

Only governors present at a meeting may vote. Proxy voting is not allowed.

A simple majority decides any matter put to the vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair has a second vote.

Voting will be by a show of hands unless one governor requests a secret ballot. In the case of a meeting that is not quorate, where an urgent decision is required a virtual ballot will be taken by the chair. This decision will be minuted at the next FGB meeting. Decisions of the Governing Board are binding on all its members.

## **URGENT ACTION**

The Chair (or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair) has the authority to take urgent action (on matters that are permitted to be delegated to an individual) between meetings where the delay in exercising a function is likely to be seriously detrimental to the interests of the school, a pupil at the school or their parents, or a person who works at the School. All such actions to be reported to the next meeting of the Governing Board by the Chair or Clerk.

## **PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

No governor will make any public statement about any matter concerning the school without the authority of the Governing Board.

## **INFORMATION AND ADVICE**

Where expertise is needed, but not available within the Governing Board, an appropriate non-governor may be invited in a non-voting capacity.

## **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

The Executive Head will attend all governor meetings.

The Deputy Head Teacher and the Head of Primary may attend meetings of the Governing Board as observers, as part of their professional development. The School Business manager will attend Resources meetings and FGB to advise on finance matters. Other staff may attend to provide information to the board and remain for the specific agenda item. None of these staff have voting rights. The Governing Board will decide who, other than those entitled to attend, may be admitted to a meeting and which meetings will be open to parents or the public.

## **DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS**

An individual governor may take no action unless authority to do so has been delegated formally by resolution of the Governing Board. See Urgent Action

## **COMMITTEES**

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



When establishing Committees, the Governing Board will:

- determine the membership
- select or confirm the Chair and Vice Chair
- establish the terms of reference (in consultation with the Committee)

The Governing Board may co-opt non-governors to Committees, but they may not form a majority and have no vote unless the Governing Board specifically gives them a vote.

The Head Teacher and Chair and governors have the right to attend any Committee meeting.

### **WORKING GROUPS**

When establishing Working Groups, the Governing Board will:

- determine the membership
- select or confirm the Chair
- establish the terms of reference (in consultation with the Group)
- determine procedures for reporting back.

The Head Teacher and Chair has a right to attend any Working Group meeting.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All governors have a duty not to discuss any confidential item of governors' business outside the meeting.

### **REVISION**

The Governing Board will review these Standing Orders at the Annual Meeting at the start of each school year.

## **GOVERNORS ALLOWANCES POLICY 2021**

### **NGA**

Expenses may only be paid to governors or associate members where a scheme is in place.

Regulation 28 of the Roles, Procedures and Allowances Regulations 2013 allows governing bodies to set up a scheme for the payment of allowances (out of pocket expenses) to members of The governing body, and associate members.

### **Delegation**

The governing body may delegate the setting up of such a scheme to a committee, any governor or the Headteacher. Regulation 18(1) of the Roles, Procedures and Allowances Regulations 2013

“It is good practice to pay such allowances as governors should not be out of pocket for the valuable work they do” NGA

These regulations give Governing Bodies the discretion to pay allowances from the school’s annual budget allocation to governors for certain allowances which they incur in carrying out their duties. Kingsmead/ Newton’s Walk School Governing Board believes that paying governor’ allowances, in specific categories as set out below, is important in ensuring equality of opportunity to serve as governors for all members of the community and so is an appropriate use of school funds. The specific items allowable reflect this objective.

1. Governors will be able to claim allowances providing the allowances are incurred in carrying out their duties as a Governor or representative of Kingsmead / Newton’s Walk School, and are agreed by the COG and Chair of Resources that they are justified before any reimbursable costs are incurred.

- The cost of travel relating only to travel to meetings/training courses at the current LA allowance;
- Travel and subsistence costs, payable at the current rates specified by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, associated with attending national meetings or training events, unless these costs can be claimed from the LA or any other source;
- Telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, postage etc.

Travel by taxi is not reclaimable except in exceptional circumstances, but mileage or equivalent bus or rail fare may be claimed instead.

2. Governors will be able to claim for the following, on a case-by-case basis and with the prior approval of the Governing Board:

- Childcare or babysitting allowances (excluding payment to a current/former spouse or partner)
- Cost of care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative (excluding payments to a current/former spouse or partner)
- The extra costs they incur in performing their duties either because they have special needs or because English is not their first language

- Any other justifiable allowances.

3. The Governing Board at Kingsmead/ Newton's Walk School acknowledges that:

- Governors may not be paid attendance allowance
- Governors may not be reimbursed for loss of earnings.

Governors wishing to make claims under these arrangements, once prior approval has been sought, should complete a claims form provided by the clerk at the AGM, attaching receipts where possible, and return it to the School within two weeks of the date when the allowances were incurred, when they will be submitted for approval by the Chair of Governors and Chair of Resources to be presented to the Resources Committee (which meets at least once per half-term) for final approval. All claims once processed will be lodged with the School Business Manager for processing, recording, budget control and auditing.

Claims will be subject to independent audit and may be investigated by the Chair of Governors (or Chair of Resources in respect of the Chair of Governors) if they appear excessive or inconsistent.

This policy will be reviewed annually at the AGM

## Governor Allowances Claims Form

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name of School: KINGSMEAD/ NEWTON'S WALK</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Post Code</b>	<b>Claim Period:</b>

I claim the total sum of £            for governor expenses as detailed below. I have attached relevant receipts to support my claim.

Signed.....

	miles	£	p
Child care/Babysitting expenses	-		
Care arrangements for an elderly or dependent relative	-		
Support for governors with special needs	-		
Support for governors whose first language is not English	-		
Travel to meetings/training courses @ 45p for first 10,000 miles			
Subsistence when attending national meetings or training events			
Telephone Charges	-		
Postage	-		
Photocopying/Printing /Stationery @	Number of sheets		
Other (please specify)			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES CLAIMED</b>			

This form should be submitted to: School Business Manager

Approved: Chair of Governors ..... Date.... /.../....

Or

Approved: Chair of Resources ..... Date.... /.../....

Date payment processed .... /.../....

Office use only:

Method of payment: cheque or via ORACLE

## **Governor role description**

**For those governing in maintained schools.**

**Governors' work together to carry out their core functions:**

1. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
3. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

4. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

Governors must also ensure that the governing body complies with all legal and statutory requirements. Governors should seek the advice of the clerk to the governing board and other professional advice as appropriate.

### **Governing body strategic responsibilities**

Governing bodies work closely with headteachers and senior leaders. Headteachers are responsible for day-to-day management whereas the role of the governing body is strategic. As such, governors are responsible for:

- determining the mission, values and long-term ambitious vision for the school
- deciding the principles that guide school policies and approving key policies
- working with senior leaders to develop a strategy for achieving the vision
- ensuring that parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are involved, consulted and informed as appropriate
- ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum such that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life
- setting the school's budget and ensuring it is managed effectively together with premises and other resources
- agreeing the school's staffing structure and keeping it under review to ensure it supports delivery of the strategy
- ensuring robust risk management procedures are in place and that risk control measures are appropriate and effective

### **Monitoring and evaluating school performance**

Governors must monitor the priorities that have been set to ensure progress is being made by:

- measuring the school's impact and progress towards its strategic objectives
- ensuring the required policies and procedures are in place and the school is operating effectively in line with these policies
- evaluating relevant data and feedback provided by school leaders and external reporting on all aspects of school performance
- asking challenging questions of school leaders in order to hold them to account
- holding the headteacher to account for standards, financial probity and compliance with agreed policies

- visiting the school to monitor implementation of the strategy and reporting back to the board (this could be in a link governor capacity)
- ensuring that there are policies and procedures in place to deal with complaints effectively

### **Panels and committees**

When required, governors are expected to serve on panels or committees in order to:

- appoint the headteacher and other senior leaders
- appraise the headteacher and make pay recommendations
- hear staff grievances and disciplinary matters
- review decisions to exclude pupils
- deal with formal complaints

### **Contribution to the governing body**

Governors should ensure that they are making a positive and meaningful contribution to the governing body by:

- attending meetings (a minimum of 3 full governing board meetings and a number of committee meetings each year), reading papers and preparing questions for senior leaders in advance
- establishing and maintaining professional relationships with senior leaders and colleagues on the board
- getting to know the school, including visiting the school occasionally during school hours
- undertaking induction training and developing knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis

### **Expenses**

Governors should receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role as governor and NGA recommends that a governing board should have such an expenses policy. Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and dependency care, but not loss of earnings.

## Clerk Role Description

### Purpose of role

To provide advice and guidance to the governing board on governance, constitutional and procedural matters. A professional clerk will contribute towards the efficient and effective functioning of a governing board and its committees by providing:

- administrative and organisational support
- guidance to ensure that the board works in compliance with the appropriate legal and regulatory framework and understands the potential consequences for non-compliance
- advice on procedural matters relating to the operation of the board

### Advice and guidance

The clerk provides independent and expert advice to the governing board on its duties and functions, contributing to the efficient conduct of the board by:

- advising the board on its core functions and Department for Education (DfE) governance advice, including the Governance Handbook and Competency Framework for Governance
- advising the governing board on relevant legislation and procedural matters where necessary before, during and after meetings
- knowing where to access appropriate legal advice, support and guidance, and where necessary seeking advice and guidance from third parties on behalf of the governing board
- informing the governing board of any changes to its responsibilities as a result of a change in school status or changes in the relevant legislation
- advising the board on the regulatory framework for governance (relevant acts and regulations, instruments of government)
- offering advice on governance best practice, including on committee structures and self-evaluation
- ensuring that statutory policies are in place, and highlight when staff need to review them
- advising on the annual calendar of governing board meetings and tasks
- facilitating new governor induction and ensuring they have access to appropriate documents, including any agreed code of conduct
- contributing to the induction of governors taking on new roles, in particular, chair of the board or chair of a committee
- anticipating issues which may arise, and drawing these matters to the chair's attention, proposing recommendations.

## **NGA Model Clerk role description**

### **Organisation and administration of meetings**

The clerk prepares for and administrates meetings, allowing the board to make effective use of their time and focus on strategic matters. The clerk supports the smooth and effective running of meetings by:

- working with the chair and headteacher to prepare a focused agenda for governing board meetings and committee meetings
- liaising with those preparing papers to make sure they are available on time, and distribute the agenda and papers as required by legislation
- ensuring meetings are quorate, inclusive and well structured
- recording the attendance of governors at meetings (including any apologies, minuting whether they have been accepted or not), and take appropriate action in relation to absences
- drafting minutes of meetings, indicating who is responsible for any agreed actions with timescales, and circulate as agreed with the governing board
- circulating the reviewed minutes to all governors/members of the committee, the headteacher and other relevant bodies within the timescale agreed with the governing board
- following-up on any agreed action points with those responsible and informing the chair of progress

### **Governing board membership**

Effective boards need members with the right skills, experience, qualities and capacity. In order to support the board's proper constitution, it is the responsibility of the clerk to:

- advise governors and appointing bodies in advance of the expiry of a governor's term of office and the impact of this on the board's capacity, diversity and skills mix
- establish, in discussion with the board, open and transparent vacancy filling processes and efficient procedures for election and appointment
- give procedural advice concerning conduct of governor elections and assist with election procedures
- collate, maintain and ensure correct publication of information about governors such as any pecuniary interests
- ensure Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and other relevant checks are carried out on any members of the board where it is appropriate to do so
- maintain a record of training undertaken by members of the governing board
- maintain governor meeting attendance records and advise the chair of potential disqualification through lack of attendance
- advise the governing board on succession planning for all governing board roles

### **Managing information**

The clerk supports the board in maintaining records of policies and procedural documents and ensures these are accessible. This requires the clerk to:

- maintain up to date records of the names, addresses and category of governing board members and their term of office, and inform the governing board and any relevant authorities of any changes to its membership
- maintain copies of current terms of reference and membership of any committees, working parties and any governors with specific oversight of an area e.g. SEND



- maintain a record of signed minutes of meetings in school, and ensure copies are sent to relevant bodies on request and are published as agreed at meetings
- maintain records of governing board correspondence
- ensure copies of statutory policies and other school documents approved by the governing board are kept in the school and published as agreed, for example, on the website

### **Relationships and development**

Good relationships between the clerk and members of the board are essential for open communication. Clerks also have a role to play in supporting and advising the governing board on their self-review and development. The clerk should fulfil these responsibilities, whilst maintaining independence, by:

- developing and maintaining professional working relationships with the chair, the board and school leaders
- contributing to the coordination of learning and development opportunities for those involved in governance, including induction and continuing professional development

The clerking competency framework supports individuals in assessing their own practice, skills and knowledge and identifying their development needs. Continuing professional development in the role of clerk should include:

- undertaking appropriate and regular training to maintain knowledge and improve practice
- keeping up to date with current educational developments and legislation affecting school governance
- participating in regular performance management, led by the chair

### **Chair role description**

The chair of the governing board is a leadership role that provides clear direction to the governing board who work as a team to challenge, support and contribute to the strategic leadership of the school.

### **Governing boards in all types of schools should focus on their core functions:**

5. ensuring there is clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
6. holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils and the performance management of staff
7. overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

NGA recognises the following as the fourth core function of governance:

8. ensuring the voices of stakeholders are heard

### **Strategic and leadership responsibilities**

The chair provides strategic leadership that allows governors/trustees to fulfil their functions by:

- ensuring that there are transparent and effective processes for recruiting and inducting a new headteacher/chief executive

- ensuring appropriate governor/trustee involvement in the recruitment of senior leaders
- ensuring the board has good knowledge of the school(s) and has mechanisms in place to obtain and listen to the views of parents, pupils and staff
- ensuring that the governing board sets a clear vision and strategy for the school(s)
- ensuring that the governing board and headteacher have a shared vision and sense of purpose
- leading the board in monitoring the headteacher/chief executive's implementation of the strategy
- setting the culture of the governing board, balancing and valuing both the support and challenge responsibilities
- ensuring the board acts as a team
- ensuring that there is a succession plan for the chair, vice chair and any committee chairs

### **Wider leadership responsibilities**

The chair has wider leadership responsibilities associated with the role and status of lead governor/trustee on the board, such as:

- being a first point of contact and playing a leading role in employment matters as required by the adopted procedures of the school/trust (for example, grievance, disciplinary, capability)
- where required, acting as a first point of contact and respondent in matters raised with the school or trust by external bodies (such as the local authority or Department for Education)
- where required, representing the governing board in its dealings with external partners and be an advocate for the school/trust
- attend school events as appropriate and encourage other governors to do so

### **Developing the team**

Governing boards need a range of skills and knowledge to carry out their functions effectively. It is the responsibility of the board's chair to:

- ensure the board has the required skills and commitment to govern well, and that appointments made fill any identified skills gaps and ensure a diverse team
- ensure all members of the board have a thorough understanding of their role and receive appropriate induction and ongoing development as required
- ensure that board members are involved, feel valued and encourage their development
- ensure members of the board act reasonably and in line with the board's agreed code of conduct
- develop a good working relationship with the vice chair, keeping them fully informed and delegating tasks as appropriate

### **Working with school leaders**

Chairs and school leaders (headteachers in schools and the chief executive of a trust) must develop effective working practices which are mutually supportive. It is the responsibility of chair to:

- ensure that the governing board fulfils its duty of care to the headteacher/chief executive, including ensuring a safe and secure working environment, a reasonable work-life balance, and support for their wellbeing

- ensure all board members concentrate on their strategic role and hold the headteacher/chief executive to account
- build and encourage a professional relationship with the headteacher/chief executive which allows for honest conversations, acting as a sounding board and ensuring there are no surprises at meetings
- meet regularly (normally monthly) with the headteacher/chief executive
- oversee and participate in the headteacher/chief executive's performance review, ensuring that appropriate continuing professional development (CPD) is provided
- ensure that the headteacher/chief executive provides staff with an understanding of the role of the governing board and acts as link between the two

Influencing improvement and achieving outcomes

The board's activities should be focused on school / trust improvement and achieving the best outcomes for pupils. The chair of the board is expected to:

- ensure the board is involved at a strategic level in the school's self-evaluation process and that this feeds into its key priorities
- ensure the board's business is focused on the strategic priorities
- collaborate with school leaders to ensure the board has the information it needs to monitor the implementation of policies; pupil attainment and progress and the financial health and sustainability of the school or trust
- evaluate and question information in order to identify appropriate actions, modelling this approach for other board members
- take the lead in representing the governing board at relevant external meetings with agencies such as Ofsted, the DfE and the local authority

### **Leading governing board business**

Chairs are responsible for the smooth and effective running of board meetings and so are required to:

- ensure that the governing board appoints a professional clerk capable of advising the board on its functions and relevant procedure
- ensure that a development and appraisal process is in place for the clerk that includes a conversation about the pay and remuneration they receive
- work with the clerk and the headteacher/chief executive to plan for board meetings, ensuring that agendas focus on the board's key responsibilities and strategic priorities and reduce unnecessary paperwork
- chair meetings effectively and promote an open culture on the governing board that allows ideas and discussion to thrive while ensuring clear decisions are reached as quickly as possible
- collaborate with the clerk to establish effective working procedures and sound committee structures
- ensure that decisions taken at the meetings of the governing board are implemented
- ensure that complaints made to the governing board are dealt with in a timely and effective manner through the adopted complaints procedure

### **Expenses**

Governors and trustees should receive out of pocket expenses incurred as a result of fulfilling their role and NGA recommends that boards have such an expenses policy.

Payments can cover incidental expenses, such as travel and dependency care, but not loss of earning.

## CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD (Special School) and MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (PRUs)

Our constitution is guided by the Constitution Regulations 2012.

The current composition of the governing board as of September 2022 is as follows

### KINGSMEAD SCHOOL & NEWTONS WALK CONSTITUTION OF GOVERNING BOARD

CATEGORY	TERM OF OFFICE	MEMBER	KM APPOINTED	KM UNTIL	NW APPOINTED	NW UNTIL
Executive Headteacher		Mike Pride	September 2018		September 2018	
1 LA	4 years	Debs Robinson	2020	2024	2020	2024
1 Staff Governor	3 years	Will Broderick <b>KM</b> Maria Lewis <b>NW</b> <i>Jemma Tague NW</i>	September 2017 n/a n/a	Aug 2024 n/a <i>July 2022</i>	n/a September 2022 <i>August 2010</i>	n/a August 2025 <i>July 2022</i>
7 Co-opted	4 years	<i>Kat Pilling</i> Sandra Fletcher Jade Murden <i>John Boyle</i> Cecilia Emery Kieran Dwyer Mina Munns Vacancy Vacancy	<i>Oct 2013</i> June 2011 June 2016 <i>June 2019</i> Dec 2019 April 2021 Nov 2022	<i>July 2022</i> May 2023 May 2024 <i>Oct 2022</i> Nov 2023 March 2025 Oct 2026	<i>April 2016</i> April 2016 June 2016 <i>June 2019</i> Dec 2019 April 2021 Nov 2022	<i>July 2022</i> March 2024 May 2024 <i>Oct 2022</i> Nov 2023 March 2025 Oct 2026
<b>KM 2 Parent</b> <b>NW 1 Parent</b>	4 years	Vacancy Vacancy				
Associate Members	1 year	Emmet Bunting <b>KM</b>  Lia Copestake <b>NW</b>	Sept 2018  April 2016	Re appoint annually	Sept 2018  Oct 2015	Re appoint annually
Co-opted to Committees	1 year	Helen Buckley – Business Manager (Resources)	Oct 2013	Re appoint annually	April 2016	Re appoint annually

Updated November 2022

*Please note, Governors in Italic have left.*

**Full Governing Board - Terms of Reference (TOR) - Remits of FGB**  
**There is no legal requirement for the FGB to have TOR. Committees must have TOR.**

However to give some guidance we consider the following useful

<b>Administration and Governance</b>
1. Changes to the Instrument of Government, including terms of office
2. To decide the arrangements for FGB meetings and additional meetings (legal minimum of 3 per year)
3. To regulate the procedures of meetings, for example code of conduct
4. To publish proposals for alteration, change of category or closure of the school
5. To ensure that the school meets for 380 sessions in a school year
6. Setting the Individual School Range (ISR)
7. Decision to federate, academise or form joint committees with other schools
8. To consider whether or not to exercise delegation of functions to individuals or committees
9. To appoint a clerk to the Discipline Committee (who is not a governor or head teacher)
10. To publish proposals to alter, discontinue or change category of school
<b>Membership</b>
1. To appoint, suspend or remove governors
2. To appoint, dismiss and fix the salary of the clerk to governors
3. To appoint associate members ( non-voting )
4. To elect or remove the chair
5. To elect or remove the vice-chair
6. To appoint link or designated governors, for example performance management, safeguarding
7. Establishment and membership of committees and their remits, including selection panels for head teacher and deputy head teacher recruitment
<b>Staffing</b>
1. To recruit and ratify the appointment of a new head teacher
2. To recruit and ratify the appointment of a new deputy head teacher and staff on the leadership spine
3. To determine the arrangements for the appointment of all other staff
4. To ratify the appointment all other staff
5. To determine dismissal payments/early retirement
6. To suspend and dismiss the head teacher
7. To end the suspension of the head teacher
8. To suspend and dismiss other staff
9. To end the suspension of other staff
<b>Finance</b>
1. To approve the Annual Budget Plan and Best Value Statement
2. To establish the financial limits of delegated authority to enter into commitments and to authorise payments
3. To approve a written description of financial systems and procedures in line with LAs scheme for financing schools
4. To establish the governors' register of pecuniary and business interest and oversee its maintenance
5. To ensure the school is working to the SFVS standards
6. To establish and monitor a governors expenses scheme
<b>Standards</b>
1. To participate in the school self-review process including the review of the governing board effectiveness and 360 review of the COG
2. To approve the School Improvement Plan
3. To comply with the requirements of the Ofsted Inspection Framework
4. To consider in full any inspection report made by Ofsted , DfE or the LA and ensure they are incorporated in the SIP
5. To receive school improvement information from the school, LA , consultants and Ofsted
6. To be involved and sign off on the schools self-review statement
7. To ratify targets for pupil progress

<b>Policies</b>
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SEND. Standards then FGB
Instruments of Government
Code of Conduct
Governors Allowances
Safeguarding. Resources then FGB
Children with health needs who cannot attend school. Standards then FGB

## NGA Standards committee:

<b>Name of school:</b>	The Kingsmead and Newton's Walk School
<b>Name of committee:</b>	Standards
<b>Date agreed:</b>	July 2022
<b>Review date:</b>	July 2023

<b>Chair of committee:</b>	Debs Robinson
<b>Clerk:</b>	Sharon Barker
<b>Membership:</b>	Membership may include associate members but (for voting purposes), a majority of committee members should be governors.
<b>Quorum:</b>	At least three governors who are members of the committee. The governing board can specify a higher limit.
<b>Meetings:</b>	Meet every half term.4.30-6.30pm, either at Bridge Street or via Teams.

## The standards committee has delegated responsibility to:

1. review the curriculum offer, ensuring that statutory requirements are met
2. ensure that the curriculum offer reflects the school's values
3. ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of **all** pupils regardless of ability, age, sex or ethnicity.
4. ensure that the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are met, as laid out in the Code of Practice.
5. ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness.
6. ensure that required information relating to the school's curriculum (and careers programme where relevant) is published on the school's website
7. monitor and evaluate the results of pupil's learning in terms of progress and attainment and how well pupils perform in examinations and assessments.
8. evaluate the impact of the curriculum in terms of pupils' preparedness for the next stage of education and employment.
9. monitor and review the progress and attainment of specific groups of pupils including those in receipt of pupil premium funding and pupils with SEND.
10. monitor and evaluate the impact of continuing professional development on the quality of teaching.
11. advise the [resources committee] on the funding priorities necessary to deliver the curriculum.
12. consider recommendations relating to teaching and learning from external reviews of the school (for example, Ofsted or local school improvement advisers), and ensure an appropriate plan is in place to act on any recommendations.
13. review and monitor any policies delegated by the full governing board

<b>Delegated policies</b>
SEND – then to FGB
Children with Health needs who cannot attend school- then to FGB
Admissions
Equality information and objectives
School Complaints
Supporting pupils with medical conditions
Relationships and sex education
Curriculum
LAC
<u><a href="#">View Department for Education statutory policies guidance</a></u>

## Resources committee: terms of reference

### For maintained school governing boards

<b>Name of school:</b>	The Kingsmead and Newton's Walk Schools
<b>Name of committee:</b>	Resources
<b>Date agreed:</b>	July 2022
<b>Review date:</b>	July 2023

<b>Chair of committee:</b>	Cecilia Emery
<b>Clerk:</b>	Sharon Barker
<b>Membership:</b>	Membership may include associate members but (for voting purposes), a majority of committee members should be governors.
<b>Quorum:</b>	At least three governors who are members of the committee. The governing board can specify a higher limit.
<b>Meetings:</b>	Meet every half term.4.30-6.30pm, either at Bridge Street or via Teams.



## **The committee has responsibility delegated by the governing board to:**

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### **Finance**

1. review an annual budget, ensuring resources are allocated in line with the school's strategic priorities and curriculum plans
  2. maintain a realistic three-year financial plan, which takes into account the school's vision, known risks and opportunities
  3. present an annual budget to the full governing board for approval
  4. monitor actual income and expenditure at least once a term against the approved budget
  5. benchmark income and expenditure against that of similar schools, considering comparative performance and opportunities to improve efficiency
  6. ensure that sufficient funds are allocated for staff pay increments
  7. report back to each meeting of the full governing board, alerting them to potential problems and significant variations to the approved budget at the earliest opportunity
  8. monitor spending of pupil premium, PE and sport premium (and other relevant premiums); ensuring that funding is spent effectively and is having the intended impact on pupil outcomes
  9. review and approve any adjustments to the school's approved budget (subject to the local scheme of delegation)
  10. approve expenditure and virements of sums over £75,001. Sums below this amount are delegated to the headteacher
  11. undertake detailed scrutiny and recommend approval of the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) and undertake actions identified as part of the SFVS
  12. ensure local authority financial procedures are complied with
  13. receive and act upon any issues identified by a local authority audit
  14. ensure that the school follows basic procurement rules and achieves best value for money when acquiring goods and services
  15. assess the school's insurance cover to ensure that it provides adequate protection against risks
- 

### **Staffing**

16. review the staffing structure of the school annually, ensuring that it meets the requirements the school development plan, the curriculum and is affordable
17. consider applications from staff for variation to contract (such as secondments, early retirement, leave of absence, reduced working hours and flexible working requests)
18. review staff work-life balance, working conditions and wellbeing, including monitoring staff absence rates
19. oversee the operation of the appraisal policy, including making arrangements for the headteacher's performance management
20. review pay decision data to ensure that pay increments are awarded fairly
21. ensure that staffing procedures (including recruitment procedures) comply with equality legislation and safer recruitment practice

22. monitor the provision of staff training and CPD, ensuring sufficient budget is allocated


**Premises, health and safety**

- 23. ensure that safeguarding policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with the law at all times, having regard to statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education
- 24. ensure appropriate risk assessments are carried out and reviewed on a regular basis, particularly in response to changes in equipment or circumstances
- 25. monitor the completion of actions and recommendations arising from risk assessments
- 26. review the school's accessibility plan
- 27. receive an annual health and safety audit report and monitor any arising actions
- 28. receive a regular report on accident statistics, near misses, incidents of violence or aggression
- 29. ensure that a process is in place to approve educational visits, ensuring that health and safety planning and risk assessments have been undertaken for them
- 30. ensure that inspections of the school site, buildings and equipment take place (annually and at appropriate intervals), and a report is received identifying any issues
- 31. monitor the health and safety training that staff and governors undertake
- 32. review, adopt and monitor all policies delegated by the board

<b>Delegated policies</b>
Safeguarding then to FGB
Accessibility Plan
Website ( live )
Behaviour and Behaviour Principles
Capability
Data protection
Health and Safety
Premises Management document
SCR
Staff discipline conduct and grievances
Allegations and abuse against staff
Teachers Pay
Staff Records
GDPR
<u>View Department for Education statutory policies guidance</u>

## Governor Monitoring Visits

### Governor School Visits Policy

<b>Date approved</b>	October 2021	<b>Approved by</b>	FGB
<b>Review cycle</b>	3 years	<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date for review</b>	October 2024	<b>Author</b>	Chair of Governors

#### Policy aims

This policy aims to ensure that all governors understand:

- the purpose of monitoring visits
- the expectations for carrying out visits including preparation, expected conduct and reporting back to the governing board

***This policy should be read in conjunction with the NGA guidance.***

#### Purpose of visits carried out by governors

Visiting school on a planned, regular basis allows governors to:

- better understand their school's strengths and areas for development
- determine if agreed policies and procedures are working in practice
- identify how resources are being used
- show staff and pupils that they are interested in the life, work and achievements of a school
- experience the culture and ethos of the school

Monitoring visits should focus on:

- strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing board
- the evaluation of progress: are the things people say are happening actually happening?
- seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND)

#### Frequency of visits

The frequency of governance visits should be in accordance with the schedule established by the governing board and agreed with school leaders and relevant staff. Visits should be scheduled to allow governors to see relevant activities and strategic milestones.

#### Arranging and preparing for visits

Visits should be arranged through the headteacher, with adequate notice, and agreed with the relevant members of staff.

Due regard should be given to:

- how the visit fits with the schedule of board and committee meetings, to allow for timely feedback and discussion

- how to avoid visits clashing with important events and/or busy periods in school life
- the workload implications for staff who are likely to be involved in the visits

Governors are encouraged to prepare for their visit. This may include:

- reading and familiarising yourself with the governing board's protocol for visits and the expected conduct
- reading and familiarising yourself with the school's policy for visitors (this is different from the governor visits policy) that includes relevant health, safety and safeguarding instructions
- reading the background information relating to the focus of the visit, such as relevant section(s) of the strategic plan, performance data, policies, stakeholder information
- clarifying the purpose of the visit with the head teacher and or relevant member of staff
- confirming the visit schedule and activities

### **Conduct on visits**

When visiting the school in a governing capacity, you should:

- arrive in good time and follow the school's procedures (such as signing in and producing identification)
- adopt a friendly approach that puts everyone at ease
- be respectful of the school at work and if you wish to take notes, check that those you are with are comfortable with this
- if you are taking notes, be clear with everyone that this is for feedback purposes and that you are not recording judgements (for example on the quality of their teaching)
- ask relevant questions that are closely linked to the purpose of your visit
- acknowledge the staff and pupils you meet

Governors are also expected to behave in line with the governing board's code of conduct, being aware of the need to maintain confidentiality.

### **Expectations following a visit**

A report should be completed as soon as possible after each visit. A draft will be shared with the headteacher and any other members of staff involved in the visit and, when agreed, a final version will be included in the papers for discussion in the appropriate governing board meeting (this may be the full governing board or a committee, as appropriate).

## School visits report

<b>Governor name:</b>	<b>Date of visit:</b>
<b>Focus of visit and name of lead staff member:</b> <i>Visits should focus on:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing board</i></li><li>• <i>the evaluation of progress: are the things people say are happening actually happening?</i></li><li>• <i>seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND)</i></li></ul>	
<b>Summary of activities:</b> <i>For example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>meeting staff with leadership responsibility for specific areas, such as safeguarding or SEND</i></li><li>• <i>talking to staff and pupils</i></li><li>• <i>experiencing a lesson being taught (as part of getting to know the school, rather than making judgements about quality of teaching)</i></li><li>• <i>seeing examples of pupil work</i></li></ul>	
<b>What have I learned as a result of my visit and how will I feed this back to my board?</b> <i>Relate this back to focus of your visit.</i>	
<b>Discussion points for the governing board:</b>	
<b>Any other comments:</b> <i>An opportunity for the relevant staff member to provide comments on your report.</i>	

# A guide to school visits

For governors and trustees

April 2021



The expert organisation for school  
governors, trustees, clerks and  
other governance professionals

## ***Contents***

This guide covers four areas:

<u><a href="#">1. The focus for school visits</a></u>	32
<u><a href="#">2. Planning and preparation</a></u>	33
<u><a href="#">3. During and after visits</a></u>	34
<u><a href="#">4. Reviewing your visits policy</a></u>	35

## ***National Governance Association***

The National Governance Association (NGA) is the membership organisation for governors, trustees and clerks of state schools in England.

We are an independent, not-for-profit charity that aims to improve the educational standards and wellbeing of young people by increasing the effectiveness of governing boards and promoting high standards. We are expert leaders in school and trust governance, providing information, advice and guidance, professional development and e-learning.

We represent the views of governors, trustees and clerks at a national level and work closely with, and lobby, UK government and educational bodies.

## ***Introduction***

Monitoring visits provide governing boards with essential information about how their strategy is being implemented and how issues discussed at board level translate into the everyday life of the school.

Visiting school on a planned, regular basis allows governors and trustees to:

- better understand their school's strengths and areas for development
- determine if agreed policies and procedures are working in practice
- identify how resources are being used
- show staff and pupils that they are interested in school life, work and achievements
- experience the culture and ethos of the school

School visits can cover several activities, such as:

- meeting staff with leadership responsibility for specific areas, such as safeguarding or SEND
- talking to staff and pupils
- experiencing a lesson being taught (as part of getting to know the school, rather than making judgements about quality of teaching)
- seeing examples of pupil work

In many cases, school visits are carried out by a link governor or trustee given responsibility for monitoring a strategic priority or area of compliance. The NGA Knowledge Centre provides more information and advice about the [role of link governors and trustees](#).

### **Purpose of this guide**

This guide explains the purpose of school visits and includes advice on what to do before, during and after visits. This guide should help all governors and trustees to:

- ensure your visits are well planned and focused on school or trust priorities
- make the most of visits and ensure they have a positive impact

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### ***Useful school visits resources***

NGA members can [visit the Knowledge Centre](#) to download a model school visits policy, template visits report and template visits schedule. These documents should be adapted to meet the needs of your school.

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## **1. The focus for school visits**

Monitoring visits should have a strategic rather than operational focus. In practice, this means visits should focus on:

- Strategic priorities and key policies agreed by the governing board.
- The evaluation of progress: are the things people say are happening actually happening?
- Seeking assurance that the needs of pupils are being met (such as safeguarding and SEND).

There may be opportunities to visit your school on an informal basis, such as attending performances or events. Whilst these visits are valuable, they are not a substitute for scheduled visits with a clear focus linked to strategic priorities.



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## Understanding strategic and operational roles

The respective roles of strategic governance and operational management are explained in our guidance [What Governing Boards and School Leaders Should Expect from Each Other](#). Our guide to [Being Strategic](#) helps boards develop an annual cycle for creating, monitoring and reviewing their strategy.

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## 2. Planning and preparation

### 2.1 Scheduling visits

Governing boards should plan a schedule of visits for each academic year – our [template visits schedule](#) can be adapted for this purpose. When making these plans, boards should consider:

- Strategic milestones (things that the board expects to have happened) – these should be outlined in the school improvement plan or trust strategy document.
- How the visits schedule fits with the schedule of board and committee meetings, to allow for timely feedback and discussion.
- How to avoid visits clashing with important events and/or busy periods in school life.
- The workload implications for staff who are likely to be involved in the visits.
- The board's own capacity to fulfil the schedule: is it manageable?

The schedule of visits should be agreed between the governing board, school leaders and relevant staff. This will help ensure that the timing of visits allows governors/trustees to see relevant activities.

### 2.2 School visits policy

The governing board should adopt a policy which sets out how visits are to be conducted and explains what you should do prior to, during, and after a visit. NGA's [model school visits policy](#) can be adapted to suit your needs.

### 2.3 Pre-visit planning

Visits are more effective when governors and trustees prepare in advance. This preparation might include:

- Reading and familiarising yourself with your governing board's policy for visits and the expected conduct.
- Reading and familiarising yourself with your school's policy for visitors (this is different from the governor/trustee visits policy) that includes relevant health, safety and safeguarding instructions.
- Reading background information relating to the focus of the visit, such as relevant section(s) of the strategic plan, performance data, policies, stakeholder information.
- Clarifying the purpose of the visit with the head teacher and or relevant member of staff.
- Confirming the visit schedule and activities.

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### *Questions to ask on school visits*

NGA has developed suggested [questions for governors and trustees to ask](#) – you may wish to

refer to these examples when constructing your own questions, specific to your context and the issue you are discussing.

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## 2.4 Virtual visits

School visits are an opportunity for you to meet with staff, pupils and other stakeholders, helping you get to know your school and build relationships.

However, there are circumstances where it may be appropriate and more convenient to carry out a virtual visit. This has been a necessary approach for all boards during the COVID-19 pandemic and usually involves meeting with a member of staff and or pupils by video conference.

When planning a schedule of visits, governing boards should be aware that, whilst some areas of focus lend themselves to virtual visits, this does not allow governors and trustees to readily experience school life, culture and ethos first-hand – it is not possible to carry out effective monitoring without regular in-person visits to the school site.

Virtual visits should be planned in much the same way as in-person visits and might consist of:

- virtual meetings or phone calls with staff
- experiencing school life virtually (perhaps attending events like virtual assemblies)

Chairs should talk to school leaders about what a practical and appropriate approach to virtual visits might be. You can [read more in our guide](#) to virtual governance.

## 2.5 Frequency of visits

Governing boards are best placed to determine how often and when their visits should take place, with the aim of balancing board visibility and minimising disruption for the school.

In most cases, governors and trustees can expect to carry out monitoring visits at least twice a year. In large MATs, visits will likely be carried out by those governing at local level, whilst the trustees remain visible in other ways (for instance, through newsletters).

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## School visits e-learning

Subscribers to NGA Learning Link can access an [e-learning module on governance visits](#). The module includes an interview with an experienced governor and will help you apply the themes and principles of this guidance to a real-world context.

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# 3. During and after visits

## 3.1 During a visit

Governors and trustees are usually accompanied on their visits by a relevant member of staff to help guide their monitoring, answer questions and clarify learning points or lines of enquiry. When visiting the school in a governing capacity you should:

- Arrive in good time and follow the school's procedures (such as signing in and producing identification).
- Adopt a friendly approach that puts everyone at ease.
- Be respectful of the school at work and if you wish to take notes, check that those you are with are comfortable with this.

- If you are taking notes, be clear with everyone that this is for feedback purposes and that you are not recording judgements (for example on the quality of their teaching).
- Ask relevant questions that are closely linked to the purpose of your visit.
- Acknowledge the staff and pupils you meet.

### 3.2 After a visit

Following a visit to school, you may wish to:

- Send a follow up message thanking everyone involved in supporting your visit for their time and assistance.
- Emphasise the positive aspects (such as the behaviour of the pupils, welcoming atmosphere) with the CEO/headteacher and or relevant member of staff who acted as your guide.

### 3.3 Reporting back to the board

The impact of visits is increased when the learning is shared through structured feedback to the governing board.

As soon as possible following a visit, use any notes you have taken to complete a report on your visit. Your board will likely have a template report in place – you can [download our template report here](#).

Your report should detail the key learning points, discussion points for the governing board, the follow-up required, and next steps. When writing your report, we suggest that you:

- Use neutral, collaborative language to describe what you observed (for example, *'reading attainment in key stage 1 is poor, the school needs to improve this'* could be written as *'we have discussed the school's strategy to improve reading in key stage 1'*).
- Detail the agreed reasons for the visit and focus your report around this.
- Consider asking an experienced governor for feedback on your report.
- Send a draft of your report to the relevant staff member as a courtesy and to invite feedback before circulating more widely.
- Submit your report in line with your visits policy – ask your clerk for help if you're unsure.

You may also need to give oral feedback on your visit at a future board or committee meeting.

## 4. Reviewing your visits policy

We recommend that governing boards review the impact of their school visits when reviewing their policy, building lessons learned into future plans and considering:

- Are our visits proving useful?
- What benefits, particularly unexpected benefits, have come from our visits?
- Are we better informed and enabled to make sensible decisions?
- Is there anything we need to change about how visits are conducted, taking into account feedback from school staff?

## **Appendix A**

### **Disqualification letter 1**

I am sorry to have to write to you about this issue but our governing board minutes' record that you have not attended a governing board meeting for six months. The minutes also record that we have received no apologies for absence.

or

The governors have not accepted apologies for non- attendance.

I am writing to ask you whether you wish to continue as a school governor?

We appreciate that being a school governor is both time consuming and demanding. You may have particular problems at the moment, which prevent you attending, but hope this will be short lived enabling you to take up your role again. Please contact me by email to let me know your intention in the next seven days after receiving this letter, say by ...

If your non-attendance continues we will have to consider disqualifying you. This disqualification would comply with the six-month rule in A guide to the Law for School Governors.

"A governor who, without consent of the governing board, has failed to attend the meetings thereof for a continuous period of six months beginning from the date of the first such meeting he failed to attend, is, on the expiry of that period disqualified from continuing to hold office as a governor of that school"

We hope you will want to continue as a governor and that you can resume your much appreciated support of the school.

Yours sincerely  
Chair of Governors.

### **Disqualification letter 2**

I am sorry to have to contact you again, but our governing board record that you have not attended a governing board meeting for six months. The minutes also record that we have received no apologies for absence.

or

that governors have not accepted apologies for non- attendance.

This letter is to inform you that you will be removed from the governing board of The Kingsmead / Newton's Walk School for non – attendance. This disqualification complies with the six-month rule in A guide to the Law for School Governors.

" a governor who, without consent of the governing board, has failed to attend the meetings thereof for a continuous period of six months beginning from the date of the first such meeting he failed to attend, is, on the expiry of that period disqualified from continuing to hold office as a governor of that school"

We are sorry you have been unable to contribute as a governor as we are keen to retain governors. On behalf of the governors I would like to thank you for the service you have provided to the school, which we appreciate, is time consuming .We hope you enjoyed your time as a governor

Yours sincerely  
Chair of Governors