OLD PALACE & CHILDREN'S HOUSE FEDERATION

Governing Body
Committee Structure and Terms of Reference

1. The Governing Body

The Governing Body needs to take a strategic role, act as a critical friend to the federation and be accountable for its decisions. It should set aims and objectives and agree, monitor and review policies, targets and priorities

Terms of reference:

- To agree constitutional matters*, including procedures where the Governing Body has discretion
- To recruit new members as vacancies arise and to appoint new governors* where appropriate
- To hold at least three full Governing Body meetings a year*
- To appoint or remove the Chair and Vice Chair*
- To appoint or remove a Clerk to the Governing Body*
- To establish the committees of the Governing Body and their terms of reference*
- To appoint the Chair of any committee *(if not delegated to the committee itself)*
- To appoint or remove a Clerk to each committee*
- To suspend a governor*
- To decide which functions of the Governing Body will be delegated to committees, groups and individuals*
- To receive reports from any individual or committee to whom a decision has been delegated and to consider whether any further action by the Governing Body is necessary*
- To approve the first formal budget plan of the financial year
- To keep the Health and Safety Policy and its practice under review and to make revisions where appropriate
- To review the delegation arrangements annually*

*these matters cannot be delegated to either a committee or an individual

Frequency of Meetings: At least once a term
To be quorum: one half of the number of Governors in post should be present

2. Register of Business Interests

The governing body and staff employed at its schools have a responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business, personal interests and affairs and the interests of the federation.

Each governor or member of staff with significant financial responsibilities and their immediate families must complete a declaration form stating their interest.

Declaration forms are completed are online using Governor Hub.
The register of business interests should be made available on request to all interested parties, such as governors, staff, parents and available for audit inspection. .

The Clerk to the Governors updates the register on an annual basis, sending an email to remind governors to access Governor Hub. "Nil" returns are required.

It is the responsibility of each governor to advise the clerk of any changes during the course of the year.

A business interest is a directorship, share holding, partnership or other appointment of influence within a business or other organisation, which may have dealings with the federation and its schools (not just those which have had such dealings).

Interests which cannot be seen as likely to exert influence, or yield significant gain if the federation or its schools placed business with the organisation concerned, need not be declared. For example, a small holding of shares in a privatised utility could fall into this category whilst a half share in a business supplying stationery to bodies including schools is likely to be relevant.

Guidance as whether an interest should be declared or not is available from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets; however where doubt exists, an interest should be declared.

No governor or member of staff who has an interest in any business, which is a potential supplier of goods or services to the federation or its schools, shall take part in any decision regarding that supplier as a supplier of goods or services to the federation. At any meeting of the board of governors or its sub committees where such conflict occurs, the respective governor or member of staff must immediately withdraw from the meeting and take no part in its deliberations.

Providing that these procedures are followed, the federation may contract with any supplier it so chooses having regard to propriety, price competitiveness, quality, timely delivery etc.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Chair of the Governing Body

- To ensure the business of the Governing Body is conducted properly, in accordance with legal and London Borough of Tower Hamlets delegation requirements.
- To ensure meetings are run effectively, focusing on priorities and making the best use of time available, and to ensure that all members have an equal opportunity to participate in discussion and decision-making
- To establish and foster an effective relationship with the Executive Headteacher based on trust and mutual respect for each other's roles. The Chair has an important role in ensuring that the Governing Body acts as a sounding board to the Executive Headteacher and provides strategic direction

Persons disqualified from holding this position: Headteacher and any Staff Governor

Clerk to the Governing Body

- To work effectively with the Chair of Governors, the other Governors and the Executive Headteacher to support the Governing Body
- To advise the Governing Body on Constitutional and Procedural Matters, duties and powers
- To convene meetings of the Governing Body
- To attend meetings of the Governing Body and ensure minutes are taken
- To maintain a register of members of the Governing Body and report vacancies to the Governing Body
- To give and receive notices in accordance with relevant regulations
- To perform such other functions as may be determined by the Governing Body from time to time

Persons disqualified from holding this position: Headteacher, any governor or associate member

Chair of a Committee

- To ensure the business of the Committee is conducted properly, in accordance with legal requirements
- To ensure meetings are run effectively, focusing on priorities and making the best use of time available, and to ensure that all members have an equal opportunity to participate in discussion and decision-making

Persons disqualified from holding this position: Headteacher cannot chair the Resources Committee

Clerk to Committees

- To advise the Committee on procedural and legal matters
- To convene meetings of the Committee
- To attend meetings of the Committee and ensure minutes are taken
- To perform such other functions with respect to the Committee as may be determined by the Governing Body from time to time

Persons disqualified from holding this position: Headteacher

4. Committees

To support its work the Governing Body has established a range of committees.

Membership

- The governing body must determine the membership, proceedings and terms of reference of any committee, and must review these annually.
- The membership of a committee may include associate members, provided that a majority of members of the committee are governors.
- Each committee must have a chair and a clerk elected by the committee.
- The Headteacher is disqualified from chairing committee meetings.
- Meetings of the Resources and Curriculum & Standards Committees will be clerked by an independent professional clerk.
- Even when not a member, the headteacher is entitled to attend all committee meetings.

Meetings

- In the absence of the chair, the committee shall choose an acting chair for that meeting from among their number.
- In the absence of the clerk the committee shall choose a clerk for that meeting from among their number (someone who is not the headteacher).
- The draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated with the agenda for the next ordinary meeting of the full governing body and will be presented at that meeting by the chair (or in his/her absence another member of the committee).
- Any decisions taken must be determined by a majority of votes of committee members present and voting.

The following committees are in place:

Resources Committee

Terms of reference:

Financial policy and planning

- To review, adopt and monitor a finance policy which includes the local scheme of delegation for spending and budgetary adjustments (virements) for the committee, Executive Headteacher and other nominated staff.
- To review, adopt and monitor all additional financial policies, including a charging and remissions policy.
- To establish and maintain a three year financial plan for each school, taking into the account priorities of the School Development Plan, roll projection and signals from central government and (if applicable) the LA regarding future years' budgets, within the constraints of available information.
- To draft and propose to the governing body for adoption an annual school budget for each school, taking into account the priorities of the School Development Plan.
- To make decisions in respect of service level agreements.
- To ensure that sufficient funds are set aside for pay increments as set out in the Pay Policy and as recommended by the Executive Headteacher and the Headteacher Appraisal panel.

Financial monitoring

- To monitor the income and expenditure throughout the year of all delegated and devolved funds against the annual budget plan for each school
- To receive bi monthly budget monitoring reports from the Executive Headteacher.
- To report back to each meeting of the full governing body and to alert them of potential problems or significant anomalies at an early date.
- To meet with other committees and provide them with the information they need to perform their duties.
- Subject to the local scheme of delegation, to approve any budgetary adjustments that will from time to time be necessary in response to the evolving requirements of the federation.
- To review, complete and submit the School Financial Value Standard (SFVS), undertaking any remedial action identified as part of the SFVS.
- To receive and act upon any issues identified by a local authority audit.

Premises

- To advise the Governing Body on priorities, including Health and Safety, for the maintenance and development of the premises of both schools
- To review, adopt and monitor a Healthy and Safety Policy
- To ensure health and safety walks are completed termly and reported to the committee; from this to set out a proposed order of priorities for maintenance and development, for the approval of the governing body
- To arrange professional surveys and emergency work as necessary
- To create a project committee where necessary to oversee any major developments, and in consultation with the Executive Headteacher:
- To oversee arrangements, including Health and Safety, for the use of school premises by outside users, subject to governing body policy
- To establish and keep under review an Accessibility plan and a Building Development Plan
- To ensure that the governing body's responsibilities regarding litter, refuse and dog excrement are discharged according to Section 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, so far as is practicable

Staffing

- To draft and keep under review the staffing structure of each school
- To ensure that each school is staffed sufficiently for the fulfilment of their development plan and the effective operation of each school.
- To establish and oversee the operation of the federation's Appraisal Policy - including the arrangements and operation of the federation's appraisal procedures for the Executive Headteacher.
- To establish a Pay Policy for all categories of staff.
- To be responsible for the administration and review of the Pay Policy.
- To ensure that staffing procedures (including recruitment procedures) follow current equalities legislation.
- To review procedures for dealing with staff discipline and grievances and make recommendations to the governing body for approval.
- To monitor approved procedures for staff discipline and grievance and ensure that staff are kept informed of these.
- To recommend to the governing body staff selection procedures, ensuring that they conform with safer recruitment practice, and to review these procedures as necessary.
- In consultation with staff, to oversee any process leading to staff reductions.
- To establish the annual and longer-term salary budgets and other costs relating to personnel, e.g. training.

Frequency of Meetings: Once a term
To be quorum: one half of the number of Governors in post should be present

<u>Pay Committee</u>

Terms of reference:

- To review and monitor the appraisal system in place for teachers
- To make a recommendation to the full governing body regarding the pay recommendations submitted by the Executive Headteacher

Membership
The committee is made up of three members, two of whom must serve on the Resources Committee. Members of staff are disqualified from serving on this committee.
Frequency*: annually during the Autumn term*
To be quorum*: two governors need to be present*

<u>Curriculum & Standards Committee</u>

Terms of reference:

- To review, monitor and evaluate the curriculum offer
- To recommend for approval to the full governing body each school's Self-evaluation and School Development Plan
- To monitor and evaluate rates of progress and standards of achievement by pupils, including any underachieving groups
- To develop and review policies identified within the federation's policy review programme and in accordance with its delegated powers, including the Behaviour Policy
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of quality of teaching on rates of pupil progress and standards of achievement

- To regularly review and develop the Assessment Policy and to ensure that the policy is operating effectively
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of continuing professional development on improving staff performance
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management
- To monitor and evaluate provision for all groups of vulnerable children (e.g. looked after children) and ensure all their needs have been identified and addressed, and to evaluate their progress and achievement.
- To ensure that the requirements of children with special educational needs are met, as laid out in the Code of Practice, and receive termly reports from the Executive Headteacher.
- To consider recommendations from external reviews of the school (e.g. Ofsted or local school improvement advisers), agree actions as a result of reviews and evaluate regularly the implementation of the plan.
- To ensure that all children have equal opportunities.
- To advise the resources committee on the relative funding priorities necessary to deliver the curriculum
- To oversee arrangements for educational visits, including the appointment of a named co-ordinator

Frequency of Meetings: Once a term
To be quorum: one half of the number of Governors in post should be present

<u>Personnel Panel</u>

Terms of reference:

- To make any decisions under the Governing Body's personnel procedures e.g. disciplinary, grievance, capability where the Executive Headteacher is the subject of the action
- To make any decisions relating to any member of staff other than the Executive Headteacher, under the Governing Body's personnel procedures
- To make any determination to dismiss any member of staff

Membership: Headteacher and one other governor
No governors may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it, or have an external interest in the outcome
Frequency of Meetings: When required
To be quorum: Both must be present

<u>Complaints Panel</u>

Terms of reference:

- To hear any complaints that have not been resolved at the First Stage
- To establish the facts and make recommendations with a view to achieving reconciliation between the school and the complainant; or at the very least to satisfy the complainant that his or her complaint has been taken seriously. The panel may make recommendations based on the written submissions provided by both parties, or request that both parties attend the meeting to submit their evidence in person.
- The panel chair will ensure:
  - the meeting is minuted;
  - the remit of the panel is explained to the complainant and both they and the school have the opportunity to state their case and to seek clarity;
  - the issues are addressed;
  - key findings of fact are made;
  - the hearing is conducted in an informal manner with everyone treated with respect and courtesy;
  - the panel is open-minded and acts independently;
  - written material is seen by everyone in attendance – new issues/ evidence submitted during the meeting will not be taken into consideration

Membership: Three governors. (If possible, there should be a balance of gender and ethnicity)
No governors may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it, or have an external interest in the outcome
Frequency of Meetings: When required
To be quorum: Three governors should be present

Appeals Panel

Terms of reference:

- To consider any appeal against a decision to dismiss a member of staff made by a Personnel panel
- To consider any appeal against a decision short of dismissal under the Governing Body's personnel procedures e.g. disciplinary, grievance, capability
- To consider any appeal against a decision on pay grading, pay awards or flexible working
- To consider any appeal against selection for redundancy

Membership: Chair of Governors plus two other governors (if possible there should be a balance of gender and ethnicity)
No governors may sit on the panel if they have had a prior involvement in the complaint or in the circumstances surrounding it, or have an external interest in the outcome
Frequency of Meetings: When required
To be quorum: Three governors should be present

Executive Headteacher's Performance Review Panel

Terms of reference:

- To arrange to meet with the External Adviser to discuss the Executive Headteacher's performance objectives
- To decide, with the support of the External Adviser, whether the objectives have been met and to set new objectives annually
- To monitor through the year the performance of the Executive Headteacher against the objectives
- To make recommendations to the Resources Committee in respect of awards for the successful meeting of objectives set

Membership – Three Governors
Members of staff are disqualified from serving on this committee. The NGA advises against parent governors serving on this panel.
Frequency of Meetings: Annually, during the Autumn term
To be quorum: At least two governors should be present

5. Delegation of Responsibility to Individuals

Any individual to whom responsibility has been delegated is expected to work within the following terms of reference:

- To liaise with the appropriate member(s) of staff
- To visit the school with the purpose of gathering information concerning their area of responsibility and to increase their knowledge of the school

- To regularly report to the Governing Body, the Curriculum Committee or the Steering Group, whichever the Governing Body deems most appropriate, on developments and progress within their area of responsibility
- To raise the profile of the area of responsibility when related matters are considered by the Governing Body
- To attend training as appropriate

Disqualification – The following functions **CANNOT** be delegated to an **individual**:

Functions relating to:

- The alteration, closure or change of category of maintained schools
- The approval of the first formal budget plan of the financial year
- Federation discipline policies
- Exclusions of pupils (except in an emergency when the chair has the power to exercise these functions)
- Admission

6. Parent Governor Elections

The opening of the ballot boxes and counting of votes must be overseen by two members of the governing board – a Returning Officer and an Official Observer.

All members of the board are eligible to be the Returning Officer unless

1. They are a relative of one of the candidates, including by marriage
2. They have actively canvassed for one of the candidates, thereby breaching impartiality.
3. They are a member of staff at the school

In cases where the result of the election may be controversial, the board shall request that a member of staff from Tower Hamlets Governor Services serve as the Returning Officer

All members of the board, including staff, are eligible to be the Official Observer.
Where the Returning Officer is a Parent Governor, the official observer should not also be a Parent Governor.

Where more than one governor puts their name forward, and are eligible for the role, names will be drawn to decide who will be selected. Appropriate training will be provided as required.

Candidates will also be invited to attend the count. The Returning Officer will ensure that they are informed how many votes they have received. This information will be recorded and stored with the ballot papers, which will be retained for 12 months. When informing parents of the outcome of the election, the name of the winning candidate and how many votes they received will be communicated. The number of votes received by the other candidates will not be shared.

7. **Link Governors**

To support the work of the governing body, all governors are required to take on a link post. Positions are allocated at the first full governing body meeting of the academic year and an up to date list held by the clerk.

- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- SEND
- Disadvantaged Pupils
- English & Oracy
- Maths
- Well Being Team
- Technology Team

- Arts Team
- Diversity & Equalities

These terms of reference were agreed by the Governing Body	
Date of next review:	September 2026