



St Edward's Catholic First School

GOVERNOR ROLE PROTOCOL **POLICY**

Governor Role Protocol Policy
FGB Approval
Ratified: October 2025
Review: October 2026

ST EDWARD'S CATHOLIC FIRST SCHOOL

St Edward's Catholic First School strives to provide a broad, balanced, and relevant Catholic education in which we recognise, through mutual respect, and our mission statement that *We See Jesus in Everything We Do*.

1. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OF GOVERNORS

Schools and Governing Bodies have a vital role to play in making sure every child gets the best possible education. For maintained schools this is reflected in the law, which states that the purpose of maintained school governing bodies is to 'conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement at the school'. In all types of schools, governing bodies should have a strong focus on three core strategic functions:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- b. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

These functions are reflected in regulations for maintained schools that came into force in September 2013 and in the criteria Ofsted inspectors use to judge the effectiveness of governance in both maintained schools and academies.

Legal requirements are contained in "Governance Handbook" which is available on line, via the Department of Education website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook>

2. FULL GOVERNOR BODY MEETINGS

Full governing or body meetings are held every half term (6 times a year) in the evening and should governors be unable to attend, written apologies are required prior to the meeting. These apologies should be sent to the clerk to governors.

Attendance records will be kept by the clerk, and there is an expectation that governors will endeavour to attend every meeting.

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

A foundation governor, authority governor or co-opted governor who has been disqualified as a governor of a school, as above, is not qualified for election, nomination or appointment as a governor of any category at that school for twelve months starting on the date on which they are disqualified.

The clerk must ensure that apologies for absence, that are not accepted, are recorded in the minutes for every meeting. At two months the chair will make informal contact to see what the issue is and if some support is required. At four months, the chair will formally write to point out the absence, that an offer of support was made but that there has been no improvement in attendance and that, at six months, disqualification under the terms of The School Governance (Constitution)(England) Regulations 2012 will apply.

In addition, at four months, clerk will inform the department of schools if the governor is a foundation governor since the Bishop appointed the governor. The department for schools can also speak with the governor to ascertain why there has been an issue.

At six months, a formal letter should be issued. See Appendix A.

Meetings should be kept to a maximum of two-and-a-half hours, and all agenda items should be covered unless in exceptional circumstances.

All governing body meetings should begin with a prayer.

The clerk to governors will record minutes of the full governing body meeting and issue the agenda, on behalf of the chair of governors. Appointed minute takers will record the minutes of committee meetings, while the chair of the respective committees will issue the agenda.

3. COMMITTEES

Members making up the various committees will be agreed at the first meeting of the full governing body of each year and each committee must contain at least 3 governors. It is expected that the membership will remain largely the same for a 2 year period. Committee meetings are usually held every half term, mainly in the evenings (some committees may meet less frequently, as per need).

There is an expectation that governors will endeavour to attend all meetings of committees to which they have committed, and attendance will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Should governors be unable to attend a committee meeting they are a member of, written apologies are required prior to the meeting. Apologies should be sent to the chair of the relevant committee.

This is particularly important as the quorum for a committee is 3, and without the quorum the meeting cannot be held.

Committee meetings should be kept to a maximum of two hours.

Committee chairs should be voted at the first committee meeting and a minute taker should be appointed.

It is expected that an individual should not chair more than one committee – this will allow the workload to be more equally spread across the governing body.

Committee dates for the coming year should be set ahead of, or at, the first meeting of the year.

The terms of reference must be reviewed annually at the first meeting.

Should any meeting need to be cancelled the night before, or on the day of, the scheduled meeting, governors should be informed by telephone by the chair of the committee or the clerk to governors.

After the meeting the minutes should be checked over by each committee chair and then sent out to all governors of that committee.

Any matter which concerns a school-wide change in established practice, or which is potentially contentious in nature needs to be brought to the full governing body for resolution.

Any governor is welcome to attend a meeting of a committee of which they are not a member as a non-voting participant and new governors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with all committees.

All committee meetings should begin with a prayer.

4. OTHER GOVERNOR APPOINTED ROLES

Governors appointed in roles such as SEND Governor, Well Being Governor, Health and Safety Governor, Literacy, Maths, etc. should present a brief update outlining any discussions and actions arising from meetings or investigations relating to their functions.

These updates should occur after the committee updates at the full governing body meetings.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIRS/VICE CHAIRS

The chair of the governing body must be a foundation governor.

No member of the governing body shall serve as chair of the governing body, or any of its committees, for longer than 4 years except in exceptional circumstances. Vice chairs should be encouraged to chair part or all of a meeting as practice.

Term of office for chairs will be two years and chairs will indicate at the last meeting of the school year whether they intend to stand, but also encourage other applicants. Governors may self-nominate or nominate others and a secret ballot is then to be held while nominees withdraw.

A secret ballot will also take places for all governing body appointments if necessary.

6. COMMUNICATION

An agenda for every meeting, alongside any relevant documents, should be issued at least one week prior to the meeting date. Should a governor wish to add an item to an agenda, they should contact the clerk to governors or chair of governors / committee.

Minutes should be issued within ten days of the meeting, recording key points discussed, their outcome and any resulting actions.

Actions should specify who is responsible, and a date by which the action should be completed (if applicable).

In order to ensure meetings are as productive as possible, governors are expected to come to the meeting having read all supporting documentation provided, and done any pre-work required.

All documents will be issued via email or GovernorHub, unless a hard copy is specifically requested.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

Governors will observe complete confidentiality when matters are deemed confidential or where they concern specific members of staff or pupils, both inside or outside school. Governors will exercise the greatest prudence at all times when discussions regarding school business arise outside a governing body meeting.

Governors will not reveal the details of any governing body vote.

8. SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT/VISITS

Governors are encouraged to visit the school as outlined in the visiting policy to achieve a greater understanding of "day to day" school life.

The headteacher should also invite all governors to any school performances, activities, inset days or staff meetings where the subject being discussed is of relevance and/or relates to the development, monitoring, and evaluation of the School Development Plan.

All governors visiting the school in their capacity as a governor representative (vs parent) should sign the Governor Visits book located in the school lobby.

Visit forms will be used for classroom observation visits.

9. TRAINING

The governing body subscribes annually to the governor services training offered by the local authority, and therefore encourages governors to attend at least one training per year to broaden knowledge and to keep up with current legislation and trends. The clerk should be notified of any training course undertaken so this can be documented for inspection purposes and your GovernorHub profile updated.

10. NEW GOVERNORS

New governors will be issued with a governor induction file and invited to attend an induction meeting at the school with the headteacher, chair of governors and clerk to governors. They will also be assigned a governor "buddy".

At the induction meeting they will be informed of the various committees that operate within the governing body, and be invited to join at least one committee, and/or take on a lead role e.g., English Governor.

The headteacher will also organise an official initial visit to the school, where the new governor will be introduced to staff, and have the opportunity to talk to pupils.

All governors should attend the governor services induction course as soon as possible after joining.

APPENDIX A – Sample letter notifying a governor of disqualification after 6 months of non-attendance at meetings.

(Use school headed paper)

Dear

The governors have noted that you have not attended any meeting of the full governing body for a period of six months, starting from (insert date of 1st meeting the governor was absent without the consent of the governing body) without the approval of the governing body.

Under the terms of The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, I regret to inform you that you are disqualified from being a governor of St. Edward's Catholic First School from (enter date – six months from date of first meeting the governor failed to attend without governors' consent*).

For a foundation governor, co-opted governor, or authority governor add another paragraph:

You are not qualified for election, nomination or appointment as a governor of any category at St. Edward's Catholic First School for twelve months starting on (enter date you entered at * above).

(You may like to insert a couple of lines here thanking the governor concerned for their previous contribution – if appropriate).

Yours sincerely,

Clerk to the governing body.