



HITCHIN BOYS' SCHOOL
An Academy Trust

Governance Policy

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This is the main governance document for the Governing Body of Hitchin Boys' School. It brings into one document the perspective of all Governance by the GB, including listing of all key matters for decision, and all Policies covered by the GB. It also covers standard procedural and similar issues.

General

1. The Governing Body has legal responsibility and control over all matters concerning the school. All matters relating to the Governing Body, including the eligibility of Governors, procedures for election or appointment of Governors and office-holders, and all aspects of the operation of the Governing Body are governed by its Instrument of Government, this Governance Policy and the Law for Governors. If there is any conflict between these, then the Law for Governors shall prevail and the Governing Body will take steps to amend the Instrument of Government and/or Governance Policy accordingly. The procedures of the Governing Body, if not specified in this Policy, shall be those set out in the prevailing Law for Governors or, if not specified there, shall be those followed by the Governing Body before 1 September 2003 until or unless a decision is made to adopt new procedures.
2. In respect of the roles of the Governing Body and its Committees and the Head Teacher and staff, the Governing Body shall be guided by:
 - i. The Guidance – Roles of Governing Bodies and Head Teachers (as published by the DfE and as may be subsequently amended)
 - ii. The ‘Governing Body Decision Planner’ recommended by the DfE. A copy of this is attached, annotated for the agreed decision-making arrangements of the Governing Body.
3. Responsibility and authority for the day to day management of the school is delegated to the Head Teacher, subject to the strategy of the School agreed by the Governing Body and the Governing Body’s procedures for monitoring and review. Given the complexity and range of administrative and organisational skills required the Head Teacher may delegate responsibility for a particular area of operation to another member of the Senior Leadership Team or to another member of staff.

Elections and Terms of Office

Chair and Vice-Chair

4. When there is a vacancy or the term of office of the incumbent has ended, the elections (or re-elections) of the Chair and/or Vice-Chair shall take place.
5. The term of office of the Chair shall be one year.
6. If the post of Chair or Vice-Chair becomes vacant during the school year an election for the vacant Chair/Vice-Chair post will be held at the next meeting of the Governing Body, with a term of office set as the remainder of the school year and until no later than the second meeting of the Governing Body in the subsequent Autumn Term.
7. Any non-staff Governor may stand for election as Chair or Vice-Chair, and their nomination or self-nomination as a candidate should be circulated to other Governors with the agenda for the meeting not less than seven days in advance of the meeting. If no nominations are circulated with the agenda, nominations and self-nominations may be accepted at the meeting itself.

Associate Members

8. The Governing Body has power to appoint Associate Members to its committees. Associate Members, when appointed, shall hold office for the remainder of the school year and until no later than the second meeting of the Governing Body in the subsequent Autumn Term, and may be re-appointed annually. Associate Members may not vote in meetings of the Governing Body. Provided that the Associate

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Member has not been employed by the school in any capacity in the previous three years, that Associate Member may vote in Committee, at the discretion of the Governing Body.

Operation

9. The Governing Body meets a minimum of three times a year, normally twice a term. Meetings shall be scheduled to ensure an efficient pattern of the necessary decision-making and to ensure that the Governing Body fully discharges its duties in respect of its strategic role, its role in monitoring and evaluation and in acting as a ‘critical friend’ to the Head Teacher.
10. The Governing Body has four Committees –Resources, Teaching and Learning, Pastoral and the Chair’s Steering Group, each of which will meet at least once per term. The Chair’s Steering Group will be constituted as in §27 below: Members of the Committees will be directly appointed by the Governing Body on an annual basis at the first or second meeting of the Governing Body in the academic year or otherwise as required in the case of a vacancy arising. Decisions may be made by the relevant Committee where the Governing Body has delegated those decisions to them. In other matters the Committees may make proposals or recommendations or provide suggested options for consideration by the Governing Body. The discussions and decisions of the Committees are minuted and reported to the Governing Body for approval with the exception of the Chair’s Steering Group where only decisions, proposals and recommendations are minuted and reported to the Governing Body (see §27 below). A schedule of meetings will be published annually for the forthcoming academic year.
11. The Governing Body and each of its Committees will review at least once per year the training which may be appropriate for its members to fulfil their roles.
12. All Governors will declare any perceived, potential or actual conflicts of interest and will not vote or take part in the debate relating to that issue. The Governing Body and each of its Committees will ensure that no decision is taken in which there is or could be thought to be a conflict of interest by any Governor voting.
 - i. Staff Governors shall not be able to vote on or be entitled to participate in debates or matters related to salary issues. Staff Governors may participate in discussions regarding other staff-related, student related and student disciplinary issues. It is recognised that this could raise questions or perceptions of conflict of interest and therefore Staff Governors may not vote where such questions or perceptions arise.
 - ii. Parent Governors may participate in discussion on staff or student related issues and vote on them. Where the issues involves personal friends or relate directly to their own children at the school they may not vote.
 - iii. No Governor shall vote or participate in debate on any business linked to their employment or to any commercial interest they or their close family may have.
 - iv. If there is any unresolved question as to whether an issue may give rise to a potential conflict of interest or a perception of conflict of interest, it is to be resolved by a simple majority vote among those Governors present. Any Governor who is a subject of the unresolved question may not vote.

Operation of Committees

13. Each Committee will consist of at least FOUR Governors, including no fewer than THREE non-staff Governors. The Head Teacher will be an ex-officio member of each Committee. The Chair of Governors (or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair) will also be an ex-officio member of each Committee.
14. Each Committee may if it so wishes invite relevant staff members to attend Committee meetings either on a regular or an ad hoc basis, for the purpose of assisting in the conduct of the Committee’s business.
15. At the first meeting of a Committee in the school year a Chair and a Vice-Chair shall be appointed from among the Governors who are members of the Committee. The Vice-Chair will conduct the business of the Committee meetings in the absence of the Chair. The Committee shall also appoint a Clerk. If a vacancy arises among these officers at any time, the Committee will appoint a replacement. The Governing Body may also appoint a replacement for any member leaving the Committee.

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16. The Committee will not be quorate unless THREE Governors who are members of the Committee are present, of which at least two are non-staff Governors.
17. Each Committee will meet at least once per term, at times appropriate to the work of the Committee, where possible in advance of the full Governing Body meetings. Meetings will be convened by the Clerk of the Committee, who will be responsible for ensuring that the meeting is chaired. If neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair is available for it, the meeting would normally be postponed, though in cases of urgency it may be chaired by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Governing Body or, at the direction of the Chair of the Governing Body, any other Governor. Any Governor so directed shall be regarded as a member of the Committee for that meeting.
18. All Governors who are members of the Committee shall be entitled to vote. An Associate Member of the Governing Body who is a member of the Committee and is authorised may also vote. The Chair (or Governor acting as Chair at the meeting) shall have an additional casting vote where the vote is tied.
19. The Clerk will carry out the required duties of the Clerk including calling meetings, circulating the agenda and relevant papers at least 7 days before a meeting. The Clerk will ensure that any decisions or recommendations of the Committee that may involve consequent decisions of other Committees or the Governing Body are promptly conveyed to them. The Clerk may be assisted by a member of staff in the preparation of agendas and minutes
20. Minutes of the meeting will be made to record the names of those attending, time and place, and any substantive discussion, debate, challenge, decision, action points or recommendations to be made to the Governing Body, clearly indicating which of these are decisions and which are recommendations.
21. Recommendations must be framed in such a way as to offer the Governing Body clear proposals or alternatives to debate and decide upon.
22. Minutes will be circulated to:
 - The Chair of the Committee within ten days after the meeting for approval.
 - Other members of the Committee and to other Committee Chairs within twenty one days after the meeting
 - All other Governors with the agenda for the next Main Board meeting
23. The Committee will work under the division of responsibilities and the procedures set out in this document, and shall review its Terms of Reference at the first meeting of the Committee in the school year, and submit its reviewed Terms of Reference to the next meeting of the Governing Body for approval.
24. The Committee will consider matters as included in the agenda and/or as directed by the Chair of Governors and take advice when and as appropriate from the Head Teacher.

Operation in cases of urgency

25. The Chair shall have the power provided in the Law for Governors to act in matters of urgency. Whenever practicable and appropriate, however, the Chair will seek to obtain the views of the Governing Body on any urgent action he/she proposes, through circulating the proposal for action by e-mail (with, where practicable, hard copies delivered or mailed to Governors without e-mail facilities). The details of any decision taken by the Chair as a matter of urgency shall be recorded as a note on the agenda of the next following full meeting of the Governing Body. At its discretion the Governing Body may also decide to use the same e-mail procedure for consultation in respect of any other of its responsibilities.

Discharge of Responsibilities

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26. The full Governing Body shall consider all issues specified for it under the Law for Governors. It will delegate to its Committees relevant issues to be considered there, in accordance with the Terms of Reference of those Committees, as agreed by the Governing Body, and the 'Decision Planner' schedule below. The Governing Body shall, however, have the option at its discretion to consider and decide on any issue except those disciplinary issues where the Governing Body must act through its Committee. The full Governing Body shall, with the advice of any relevant Committee, consider, and review annually, any issue which raises questions of how the school can satisfactorily comply with regulations and obligations placed upon it.

The Chairs' Steering Group

27. The Chairs' Steering Group consists of the Chair of Governors, the immediate past Chair, the Vice-Chair, the Chairs of Committees and the Head Teacher. The Group's main roles shall be to:
- i. Give further consideration to key issues identified by the Governing Body and develop thoughts, ideas and proposals to be considered by the Governing Body
 - ii. Discuss informally issues that relate to more than one Committee, with a view to co-ordination and facilitation of the work of the Governing Body.
 - iii. Act as a working group to ensure that longer-term strategy issues and 'Blue-Sky' issues are considered and developed and brought to the Governing Body in a way that enables the Governing Body to have an effective discussion on them.
 - iv. Act as a working group in respect of any Inspection of the School.
28. The Group will normally be informal in procedure and approach. The basis of it shall be to ensure cohesion in the work of the Committees and the Governing Body, and to progress the approach taken in the Governors' self-review. The Governing Body may however delegate to the Chairs' Steering Group any decision that is not specifically reserved for the whole Governing Body. Any such decisions taken by the Group shall be minuted and reported to the Governing Body.
29. The Group may co-opt other Governors who could contribute to its effectiveness and to that of the Governing Body. Such co-options would generally be ad hoc, to cover specific issues or objectives, and informal, so that it would make good use of the interest and expertise of those Governors for the specific projects or tasks of the Group, and the co-option would end when those tasks had been completed. Where appropriate the Chairs' Steering Group may also invite others, such as members of the teaching staff, who may have specific knowledge or expertise which may be valuable to the work of the Group.

Amendments to this Policy

30. The attached Decision Planner shall be an integral part of this Policy, setting out the delegation and scheme of decision-making agreed by the Governing Body. Any changes to this Policy and the Decision Planner shall require a decision of the Governing Body.

School policies and other documents

31. The School's 'Policies and other documents', including those that governing bodies are required to have by law, are listed in the Terms of Reference for each Committee

Approved by Governors' Main Board July 2018

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Area	Decision	Delegation				
		Members	Main Board	Committee	Individual trustee	Headteacher
Governance framework						
People	Members: Appoint/Remove	✓				
	Trustees: Appoint/Remove	✓	✓			
	Role descriptions for members	✓				
	Role descriptions for trustees/chair/ specific roles/committee members: agree		✓	<A		
	Parent trustee: elected		✓			
	Committee chairs: appoint and remove		✓	<A		
	Clerk to board: appoint and remove		✓			
Systems and structures	Articles of association: agree and review	✓	<A	<A		
	Governance structure (committees) for the trust: establish and review annually	✓	✓	<A		
	Terms of reference for trust committees (including audit if required, and scheme of delegation): agree annually		✓	<A All committees		
	Skills audit: complete and recruit to fill gaps		✓			
	Annual self review of trust board and committee performance: complete annually		✓			
	Chair's performance: carry out 360 review periodically		✓			
	Trustee contribution: review annually		✓			
	Succession: plan		✓	<A		

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Area	Decision	Delegation				
		Members	Main Board	Committee	Individual trustee	Headteacher
	Annual schedule of business for trust board: agree		✓	<A		<A
Reporting						
Reporting	Trust governance details on trust website: ensure		✓	<A	<A	<A
	Register of all interests, business, pecuniary, loyalty for members/trustees: establish and publish		✓	<A		
	Annual report on performance of the trust: submit to members and publish		✓	<A Resources		
	Annual report and accounts including accounting policies, signed statement on regularity, propriety and compliance, incorporating governance statement demonstrating value for money: submit		✓	<A Resources		
	To determine whether to publish a home school agreement (not statutory)			< A Pastoral		✓
	Overall responsibility for ensuring that statutory requirements for information published on the school website, including required details of governance arrangements, performance, financial and equality data are met		✓	<A	<A	<A
	To publish and update at least annually a SEN information report (meeting requirements set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014)		✓	✓ Pastoral		✓

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Being Strategic						
Being Strategic	Determine trust policies which reflect the trust's ethos and values including: admissions; expenses; data protection and FOI; SEN, safeguarding and child protection and curriculum, : approve		✓	<A All committees		<A
	Determine trust staffing policies which reflect the trust's ethos and values including appraisal, capability, discipline, conduct and grievance: approve		✓	<A Resources		<A
	Determine trust policy for complaints, health and safety, accessibility plan, premises management, data protection and FOI: approve		✓	✓ Resources		<A
	Establish trust policy for sex education, careers guidance			T&L		✓
	Determine a behaviour and discipline policy that promotes good behaviour among pupils and defines the sanctions to be adopted where pupils misbehave		✓	<A Pastoral		<A
	To draft content of school behaviour policy and publicise it to staff, students and parents.			Pastoral		✓
	To annually determine admission arrangements and to carry out consultation where changes are proposed, or where the governing board has not consulted on their arrangements in the last seven years.		✓			
	Ensure a broad and balanced curriculum is in place		✓	<A T&L		<A
	To set the times of school sessions and the dates of school terms and holidays		✓			
	Agree enrichment/extra-curricular offer including any additional services required		✓	✓ T&L		<A
Imbed agreed curriculum and enrichment offer within the day to day operation of the academy trust					✓	

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	To establish and agree a Pay policy		✓	✓ Resources		
	Management of risk: establish register, review and monitor		✓	<A Resources	✓	<A
	Engagement with stakeholders	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Trust's vision and strategy, agreeing key priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) against which progress towards achieving the vision can be measured: determine	✓	✓	<A		<A
	Principal: Appoint and dismiss		✓			
	To decide whether to join or form a multi-academy trust	✓	✓			
	Budget plan to support delivery of trust key priorities: agree		✓	<A Resources		
	Academy staffing structure: agree		✓	<A Resources		<A
	Appoint teaching staff		A>			✓
	Appoint non-teaching staff					✓
Holding to account						
Holding to account	Auditing and reporting arrangements for matters of compliance (eg safeguarding, H&S, employment): agree		✓	<A Resources/Pa storal	<A	<A
	To produce and maintain a central record of recruitment and vetting checks					✓

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	To have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and to oversee the incorporation of the necessary procedures and practices outlined in the <i>Prevent</i> duty into the child protection policy		✓	< A Pastoral	<A	<A
	Reporting arrangements for progress on key priorities: agree		✓	✓ All committees		<A
	Performance management of the Principal: undertake		✓			
	Performance management of staff: undertake					✓
	Establish and review procedures for addressing staff discipline, conduct and grievance		✓	<A ✓ Resources		
	Trustee monitoring: agree arrangements		✓	<A		
	To review all permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions where the pupil is either excluded for more than 15 days in a term or would lose the opportunity to sit a public examination.			✓		
	To ensure that health and safety regulations are followed					✓
	Ensure that school lunch nutritional standards are met					✓
	Maintain a register of pupil attendance					✓
	To ensure provision of free meals to those pupils meeting the criteria, including Universal Infant Free School Meals (if applicable)					✓

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Ensuring financial probity						
Ensuring financial probity	Chief financial officer for delivery of trusts detailed accounting processes: appoint		✓	<A		
	Trust's scheme of financial delegation: establish and review		✓	<A	<A	<A
	External auditors' report: receive and respond		✓	<A Resources		<A
	Principal pay award: agree		✓	Resources		
	Staff appraisal procedure and pay progression: monitor and agree		✓	<A Resources		<A
	Benchmarking and academy trust value for money: ensure robustness		✓	<A Resources		
	Develop trust procurement strategies and efficiency savings programme			✓ Resources		
	To approve the first formal budget plan each financial year		✓	<A Resources		
	To agree annual action plans and monitor how school premiums are spent (i.e. PE and sports premium, Year 7 numeracy and maths catch up premium, service premium and the pupil premium)		✓	✓ T&L		
	To establish and agree charging and remissions policy		✓	✓ Resources		
Buildings insurance and personal liability		✓	<A Resources			